

NEXT GENERATION

The world's first magazine for the future of video game technology

December 1992

25

breakthrough



games

These games will change
the way you play forever

35

\$5.99 U.S. \$6.99 CAN



Too many games?

There are currently more than 1,000 computer and videogames in development around the globe. Many will not even ship, but of those that do, few will be memorable.



While no game can truly be judged until it is finished, some games, even those early in development, possess certain qualities that mark them as **projects to watch**. *Tomb Raider* was one. *Wave Race* was another.



This month, **Next Generation** picks **25 titles** that share this potential by reaching for new heights in gameplay or technology. **Will they all be hits?** Probably not. The price for reaching higher is the chance of falling further. But the contributions these games will make to the art of game design will be felt for years to come. **The story begins on page 38.**

opening



00' 00765

SHIELD //

NEXT
GENERATION

NEXT GENERATION

November 1997

6

Contact

Next Generation

Imagine Publishing, Inc.

150 North Hill Drive

Brisbane, CA 94005

Editorial

415 464 4684 voice

415 464 4685 fax

ngonline@imagine-inc.com email

Ask the editor

415 464 4684 x122 voice

415 464 4685 fax

jmh@next-generation.com email

If you have questions about a subscription,
please contact Customer Service at 479 3843
email: customerservice@imagine.com,
with "Next Generation" at the subject.

Editorial

Chris Charles, acting in-chief

Miles Wilcox senior art director

Cathy Lu managing editor

Patrick Raggatt features editor

Jeff Landis reviews editor

Tom Russo previews editor

Grant Roberts frosty

Neil West shamus-at-large

Christine Svensson editor, ng online

Dan Egger how, darn, come here a sec—

Jason McNeills marketing man solo

Colin Campbell international correspondent

Nicola di Costanzo Japanese correspondent

Editorial Contributors

Roger Banzhaf, Matt Casarzana, Jeff Chen,

Adam Douglas, Allen Favarro, Francesco

Reyes, Miles Salomon, Marcus Webb

Photography

Jude Edington

Existential philosopher

John Paul Sartre

Advertising

Doug Pease associate publisher

Jim Pothier general advertising manager

Karen Mazzoni sales manager/retail

Jillie Price sales development director

Katia Cole as coordinator

Lance Brown another defector to IDW

Production

Richard Lavoie production director

Mark Eastwood production coordinator

Imagine Publishing, Inc.

Jonathan Steppenwolff vp/president/director

Tom Hale director, CD-ROM publishing

Erica Klemm director, book publishing

Theresa Klemm executive manager

Terry Lawrence newswstand analyst

Holly Klingel vp circulation

Kristi Bailey circulation manager

Alessandra Tulli fulfillment manager

Britta Mosteller the don Juan of IS

Tom Valentine vice president/COO

Chris Anderson president

Next Generation 1050A 1070-1080 is published monthly

by Imagine Publishing, Inc., 150 North Hill Drive, Brisbane, CA 94005 USA. Postmaster: Please address Class postage and

international mailing offices to Next Generation, 150 North Hill Drive, Brisbane, CA 94005 USA, and additional mailing offices.

Subscription rates: \$19.95 per year, \$1.95 per issue. Single copy \$2.95. Back issues \$3.95. Subscriptions outside the U.S. and Canada \$24.95. Single copy \$4.95. Postage and handling extra. Postage paid at Boston, MA, and at additional mailing offices.

International distribution is handled by Curtis Circulation Company, 1000 3rd Avenue, Suite 1000, Seattle, WA 98101 USA. Canadian sales by G.I.C. Ltd., 100 University Street, Suite 1000, Vancouver, BC V6Z 1G5, Canada.

Periodicals postage paid at Boston, MA, and at additional mailing offices.

International licensing representation:

Robert J. Abramson and Associates, Inc.

720 Park Road, Scarsdale, New York 10583

Printed in the U.S.A. © 1997 Imagine Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. Imagine Publishing, Inc. also publishes *CGW*, *CGW Interactive*, *CGW3D*, *CGW4D*, and *MacWorld*. Products named in these pages are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective companies. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without written consent from the companies or products covered in *Next Generation*.

Printed in the USA

100% post-consumer paper

Recycled with U.S. Forest Service

certified environmental management

systems. This paper contains

no chlorine bleach.

It does contain

chlorine-free bleaching

processes.

Printed on the

U.S. Forest Service

certified paper.

Printed with

water-based inks.

introducing



16

talking

CyberLife's Dr. Frankenstein

Next Generation talks to Steve Grand, director of technology for CyberLife and the driving force behind the company's ambitious foray into Artificial Life creatures.

16

breaking

News

News

Sega and Sega bring out the lawyers • Details on Sega's next console • Revealed: the new secret super console from Atari alum Jeff Minter • Plus, reports from ECTS and TGS



38

ng special

The top 25

There are about a thousand games being developed for release in 1998, but not all of them are created equal. *Next Generation* picks the 25 games most likely to set the course for the industry through '98 and beyond.

57

ng software

Alphas

Including *Trespasser* (PC), *10th (Online)*, *Panzer Dragoon Saga* (Saturn), *Front Mission Alternative* (PlayStation), *Powerslave* (Multiplatform), *Seven Kingdoms* (PC), *Sonic Music Entertainment* (PlayStation), *Atari Games* (Arcade)

157

ng special

The way games ought to be

Net West continues to explore the themes of art and videogames

189

rating

Finals

Games reviewed for your pleasure, including *Peppa the Rapper* (PlayStation), *Last Breath* (Saturn), *Creatures* (PC), *Temephone* (N64)

210

now hiring

Get a job in the gaming industry! All you need to do is look here — oh, and be qualified.

217

corresponding

Letters

Here's where our readers tell us how much we are loved and appreciated — or not.

223

ending

Next month ...

Next Generation's annual report on the system wars. What should you buy? **NG** 24 hits Nov. 18

Alphas: 16 games and developers previewed

The hottest games in the works, and the people and companies that make them. *Next Generation* covers the future and brings it home to you.



Finals: 26 new games reviewed

Avoid the awful heartache of paying for a game that's worth less than its shrink wrap. Our crack team of reviewers sort the good from the bad.



The **Next Generation Disc** boasts more than 45 gameplay movies, including eight live interviews that focus on titles for PC and console gamers alike

ng Disc Contents

The latest games are in motion on the **Next Generation Disc**

The **Next Generation Disc** takes game coverage to new heights with interactive demos, digital developer diaries, and dozens of gameplay movies. Disc users enjoy seeing highly anticipated titles in action before they hit the Internet or retail shelves.

This month **Next Generation** sits down with Atari Games, Psygnosis, Eidos, Electronic Arts, Singletree, and SegaSoft in order to get the latest technology and advanced gameplay news. Many of these exclusive movies are counterparts to articles found in this month's issue of **Next Generation**.

Want to know more about the disc? Every month we publish two editions of the magazine — one comes with a disc, the other doesn't. If you would like to subscribe to **Next Generation** with the disc, or upgrade your current subscription, please call (800) 678-3643.

For **Next Generation Disc** support, go to: www.next-generation.com/cdrom



talking

talking is where you'll see and hear the people making news in the industry



ng special

special is dedicated to highlighting anticipated game titles



ng previews

previews is where you can view up-and-coming game titles



ng demos

demos lets you play the latest and greatest interactive demos



ng finals

finals is a searchable database that contains every **NG** final review



ng internet

internet provides you with the latest Internet connectivity software

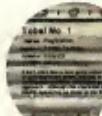
previews

Tomb Raider 2, Lost World, Vs., Aerofighter's Assault, Madden '98, Cool Boarders 2, Goldmine 007



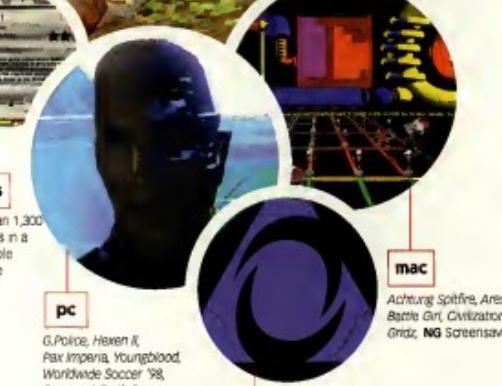
talking

Next Generation reveals DreamWorks' *Trespasser*. Meet key players Seamus Blackley and Terry Izuuri. Also witness world exclusive, first gameplay footage



finals

More than 1,300 **NG** finals in a searchable database



pc

G. Police, Hexen II, Pax Imperia, Youngblood, Worldwide Soccer '98, Conquest Earth Screen-saver, NG Screensaver

internet

America Online 3.0, Heat, The Palace 4.0, Tic-Tac-Chat



See the **Next Generation Disc** when you read an article with this symbol on it

SEGA hard stuff
www.sega.com

enemy zero

To boldly die where no one has died before. This is *Enemy Zero*, and you are Laura Lewis. You're on a space station and your crew members are being picked off one by one by an alien beast. No sweat, it's a shooting game and you can handle a gun. But you can't see the alien, only hear it. Scared? Thanks to the eerie soundtrack and intensely graphic cinematic effects you will be. Just be careful. In space no one can hear you wet your pants.



Sega is registered in the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office. Sega, Saturn and the SEGA logo are trademarks of Sega. ©1997 SEGA MMF. All rights reserved.

This is your glorious empire moments before it became



To build a Stone Age tribe into a thriving

empire, you can rest easy knowing that you can never rest easy. Because what takes thousands of years to build can be destroyed in seconds if you don't plan wisely.

In *Age of Empires*, your challenge is to take one of 12 ancient civilizations (including Egyptian, Yamato, and Greek) from grass hut beginnings to world domi-

nation in 10,000 years of real-time evolution. Which

gives you just enough time to decide whether you want to conquer everyone else, explore the four corners of the



globe, or accumulate great wealth to achieve

victory. And with a 100-node technology tree, you can choose your advancements accordingly. For instance, you can research gold mining or commerce



"Best real-time strategy game."

their glorious empire.

Microsoft

Where do you want to go today?



to amass great riches, or ballistics and naval warfare to strike fear into the hearts of others.

Multi-player capabilities, 40 pre-set scenarios, lavish campaigns, randomly generated maps, and an expansive scenario editor make it a new challenge each time you play. Add in the rich 3-D graphics where you'll see every flaming arrow, marching phalanx, and charging

war elephant, and the pressure to win

becomes downright intense.



But before you think you've got what it takes to win, make sure you've got the empire to back it up.

AGE OF EMPIRES

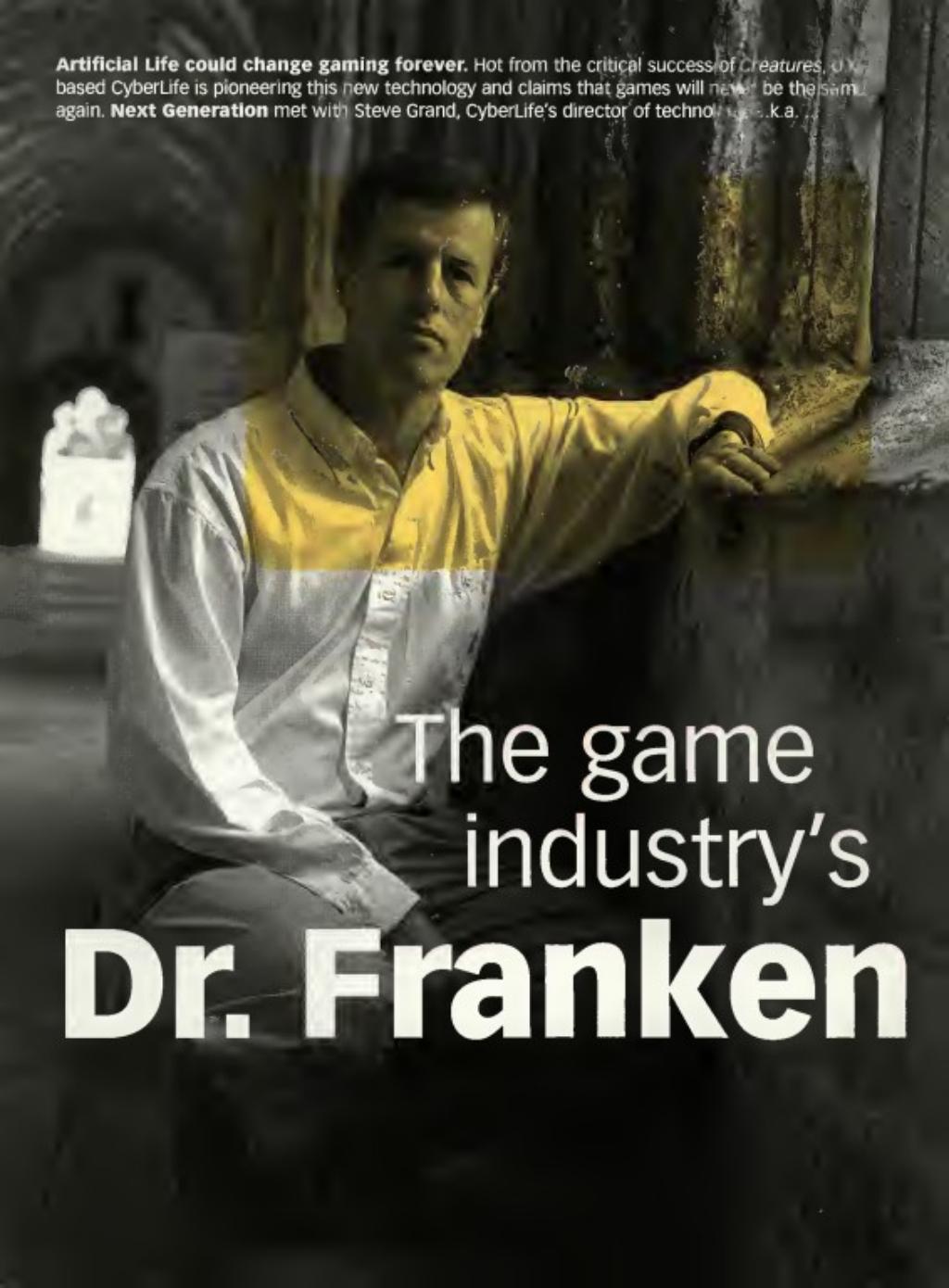
Choose your favorite form of world domination.

www.microsoft.com/games/empires

"Microsoft heads right to the top of the real-time strategy class with Age of Empires."

— Computer Games Strategy Plus, June 1997

Artificial Life could change gaming forever. Hot from the critical success of *Creatures*, UK-based CyberLife is pioneering this new technology and claims that games will never be the same again. **Next Generation** met with Steve Grand, CyberLife's director of technology, to find out more.



The game industry's **Dr. Franken**

During the final stages of the development of creatures, strange things started happening. The game (published by Mindscape) is kind of a complex Tamagotchi, in which the player has to guide little critters called Norns around the game world, helping them learn about their habitat, survive, and evolve (see review page 20). One day, a play tester went to lunch, leaving the game running on his PC with just one solitary Norn wondering about. He came back from lunch to find the game world full of Norns squabbling with each other. Where the hell had they come from?

It turns out the solitary Norn had worked out — all by itself — that if it picked up Norn eggs and threw them in the incubator, cut would pop a friend. This made it happy. It then spent all its subsequent time scouring the world for eggs and placing them in the incubator.

The salient point of this story being that no one at Cyberlife knew that this would happen. No one programmed this behavior. It was a complete surprise. Except, of course, that it wasn't. Because when you're dealing with

Artificial Life, you have to expect the unexpected.

What is Artificial Life?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a field of computer science that attempts to create intelligent machines. Artificial Life (AL) is a field of computer science that attempts to create life-like systems. In other words, AI tries to make a machine think like a human, while AL tries to make a system act like a living creature.

Steve: To an Artificial Intelligence person, the pinnacle of success would be to create a machine that plays chess. They think that because human beings find it hard to play chess, playing chess must be a very intelligent thing to do, and so that's what they try to achieve. However, if you drop a chess computer in the bathtub, it isn't smart enough to call out for help or find a way out. So, if you ask me, it's not very intelligent.

Steve: Artificial Intelligence and Artificial Life take two completely different approaches to the problem of

recreating lifelike intelligence and behavior. On the one hand, AI attempts to model and replicate specific areas of behavior of very complex systems (such as human beings) without regard to the underlying structure that makes them what they are. On the other hand, AL people would consider the intelligence of a rat to be an ambitious goal and set about trying to model the underlying structures that make up rats — almost like trying to replicate a rat from the ground up — in the belief that genuine ratlike intelligence will eventually emerge from the system.

stein

talking



prepares for a holiday in France by learning a few French phrases, parrot fashion, and someone who actually sits down and learns the language from scratch. The first person may appear to achieve the more immediately impressive results, but in the long term, the second person will prevail. In theory, at least.

Steve: AI is a top-down approach to the problem — it tries to control the system and mimic effects. Whereas Artificial Life is a bottom-up approach — it tries to recreate the cause of the behavior, the underlying structures of whatever life-form is being simulated, and let the behavior occur naturally as a result.

NG: And in this way, you will achieve superior results to a solution based on AI?

Steve: It is the only way to create truly lifelike behavior, yes. If you approach the problem in the normal AI way and try and mimic behavior without considering or replicating the processes that determine this behavior, you end up fudging all the time. You end up bolting on rule after rule to try and explain all the

If you drop a chess computer in the bath-tub, it isn't smart enough to call for help

little quirks. In this way, most attempts to create lifelike behavior using AI suffer from immense complexity problems and eventually programmers just give up.

NG: As more and more AI routines are added in an attempt to get more and more sophisticated behavior, programmers find themselves constantly having to wallpaper over cracks ...

Steve: Exactly. And the user is not fooled. It's obvious that the people you shoot in *Doom*, for example, are not real people, and no matter how hard you try with the AI approach, you will never be able to fool people.

NG: So AL is the best long-term way to mimic lifelike behavior, even though — at this stage — it is still in its infancy?

Steve: Obviously, at this stage you can't expect AL to achieve everything you want. Your Artificial Life won't immediately be able to play chess, for example. But the belief is that eventually and way down the line, it may learn how to play for itself.

A core philosophy is that only by following the same evolutionary route that real life took will we ever be able to achieve intelligent systems at a human level.

And because AL is still such a new science, it is a necessary step to start off with something like rats and then work upwards.

Building the beast

NG: So implementing this theory, how do you start work on creating AL?

Steve: If you're attempting to create some kind of artificial animal life — say a rat or a monkey — you would try and recreate the way its brain works. An animal brain is a neural network — a network of neurons, which are relatively simple processing structures, wired together in very complicated ways.

The behavior of the brain is the result of the wiring and not some smart, central neuron somewhere that understands things. It's a parallel system, as opposed to, say, a computer that is a serial machine handling one task at a time.

NG: So it's the way these individual neurons interact and are wired together — the structure of this neural network — that results in an animal's behavior?

Steve: Right. Compare it to an ant's nest. Individual ants are very stupid, but a colony of ants can make extremely complex mounds with tunnels and so on, even though there are no little architect ants who know the plans and are telling the others what to do. The mound is simply the result of a lot of little ants doing their own thing, guided by very simple rules.

If you look at human beings, we are made up of about one trillion little cells. Each cell is very simple, relatively speaking — it just does a few things. So you have a trillion little cells in your body doing very simple jobs. Not one of them's in charge. Not one of them even knows what all the other cells are there for or what they do. And yet the whole thing fits together and works as an extremely complicated single machine.

Brains based on neural networks work in a very similar way.

NG: And if you can model that neural network on a computer, you can effectively recreate the processes that result in complex animal behavior?

Steve: And at that point you have Artificial Life, yes.

Origins of Artificial Life

NG: How did Artificial Life first begin?

Steve: Artificial Life really started in 1987 when Dr. Christopher Langton organized a conference in Los Alamos. He'd discovered that there were a lot of scientists and researchers working with common goals in different areas, but that up until this conference, these people weren't even aware of each other's existence. They certainly weren't talking together.

NG: So what kinds of things were all these people working on?

Steve: For example, there were people working on self-replicating systems, people working on complexity theory, and people working in various fields that were more akin to massively parallel biological systems than the traditional serial computer fields. Fundamentally, all these people were working on complex adaptive systems — such as economic systems, in which thousands of individuals acting autonomously create trends — and he realized that all these projects shared a common fundamental premise, and this was the start of Artificial Life.

NG: Was Artificial Life given an official definition?

Steve: Yes. Dr. Langton offered that "Artificial Life is the study of man-made systems that exhibit behaviors characteristic of natural living systems. It complements the traditional biological sciences concerned with the analysis of living organisms by attempting to synthesize life-like behaviors within computers and other artificial media. By extending the empirical foundation upon which biology is based beyond the carbon-chained life that has evolved on earth, Artificial Life can contribute to theoretical biology by locating life as we know it within the larger picture of life as it could be."

NG: "Life as it could be"? That's an interesting suggestion ...

Steve: The assumption has always been made that life is what we see. If you asked a biologist 50 years ago — or even now, sometimes — how to define life, he or she would come up with a definition in which a lot of the criteria were only applicable to carbon-based life because this is the only type of life we know. Life-forms on earth — plants, animals, fish — all happen to be made of carbon, and so far we haven't seen any little green men who were made out of silicon.

But life doesn't have to be regarded in this narrow way. The concept of life itself can be extended, and by trying to extract the central principles of life and ignoring the carbon — ignoring the detailed chemistry of life as we happen to know it on earth — we can establish what it is about life in general that makes life so much more interesting than nonlife.

NG: So you're arguing that life isn't necessarily restricted to carbon-based plants and animals, and may in fact exist in all manner of other forms. That's a revolutionary idea ...

Steve: You have to come to terms with a view of life that is not absolute. I believe that there is no such thing as "being alive" or "not being alive," but certainly some things are more alive than others. Maybe a thunderstorm is more alive than a brick, for example. And not only are some things more alive than others, but they can be alive in different ways — so life is not just a one-dimensional continuum.

NG: So what things that most people would consider "dead" — or at least "without life" — might in fact be alive?

Steve: When you start looking at the world in this way, all sorts of phenomena — such as economies or weather systems — show some characteristics of



living systems. What's more, there doesn't appear to be any kind of particularly important cutoff point where you can say that "these things are really alive" and "these other things really aren't alive."

NG: So are the life-forms in *Creatures* really alive?

Steve: I would argue that my creatures lie somewhere where you would put that cutoff point if you were determined to put one. Certainly, I think it's a very interesting — and valid — question whether or not the creatures are really alive. [Smiles].

I believe that there is no such thing as "being alive" or "not being alive"

Creatures, creatures, everywhere

NG: So how did the *Creatures* project get started?

Steve: About five years ago I had an idea for a game involving a whole artificial world in which you looked after a computer pet. This was before there were any other computer pets and before I'd thought much about Artificial Life. I saw this game as a small, six-month project. As I said, this was five years ago. [Smiles].

But then I realized that people wouldn't care about these computer pets unless they believed in them — unless they believed that they were alive. This, then, became my goal. I realized that no one would react with emotions to what they knew was just a sprite walking around on screen according to an algorithm, so it soon became obvious that a standard kind of rule-based system was never going to come up behavior-rich enough.

NG: So where did this lead you?

Steve: Once I'd committed myself to creating believable, rich behavior, I thought I'd start out with the idea of a neural network. It just so happened that I'd been studying neural networks and so I kind of knew where to start. I thought it would be fairly easy, and as



to be a creature.

NG: And that is the stage at which the project was completed?

Steve: There was just one more thing. Because I had a reproductive system, it was a fairly simple matter for these creatures to breed. Now, because the game was based on genetics, the creatures could pass their genes from parents to offspring and cross over, and mutation could happen. And that's how a million or so creatures got released into the world and are now capable of evolution and potentially much better brain models than I was smart enough to think of.

NG: And all without any further input or programming? They can simply evolve themselves?

Steve: Yes, and they will continue to do so.

Life, but not as we know it

NG: So just how complicated are these creatures? If you were to compare them to "real" life, what

animals would you compare them to?

Steve: They are different ... it's difficult to answer. For example, they can speak, not in a sophisticated way like we do, but then no other animal can speak, so in that sense they are very sophisticated. The psychological model that I used to design their brains is taken from the kind of behaviors of rats, so we're kind of at the rodent level.

NG: But surely a rat — compared to, say, an ant or a slug — is a very complicated animal?

Steve: Oh, absolutely. But of course in the virtual world you can cheat. In real life a large proportion of a rat's complexity is devoted to moving it around in physical space. To move a rat around involves hundreds of coordinated muscles, but we didn't have to bother about any of them. To move one of my creatures around a TV screen is a lot easier.

NG: One of the things that most people find hard to accept about *Creatures* is that some of the Norns' behavior can't be explained. But because they have no preset behavior rules, and everything they do is a natural consequence of their genetic makeup, unpredictable behavior has to be expected, right?

Steve: Right, and it's quite a scary thing. It's a very complicated thing, and I had no idea that my model would result in the kind of behavior that we see. Occasionally people ask me to explain why Norns do certain things and I have no idea. I try to work it out, but I can't explain all the steps as to how it actually happened.

You have to learn to let go, and again, this is one of the big differences between Artificial Intelligence (in which you attempt to have complete control over everything) and Artificial Life (in which you just have to sit back and see what happens).

Playing with Artificial Life

NG: So is *Creatures* state of the art as far as Artificial Life is concerned?

Steve: So I've been told. I've spoken about it at various universities and scientific conferences now —

Computer games as we know them will be a relatively short-lived phenomenon

more realism to the game world, things got very, very complicated. Over the course of development, I added to the creatures much, much more detail, including a digestive system, an immune system, and a drive-based punishment/reward system. All of these were based on accurate biochemistry models — so, once again, I'm not trying to mimic behavior but recreate the systems and biochemical makeup of real living things. I also added bacteria into the game world (bacteria that were capable of mutating into different strains) and even a reproductive system.

NG: At what point did you say, "enough is enough" and wrap up the project?

Steve: The company had given up all hope of ever publishing the game, but I went back to the drawing board for the third time and finally added genetics. So instead of programming in all of the biochemical and neural structures that made up the creatures, instead I programmed a model of genetics in which genes cope with these things — I took it yet another step further down the ladder.

In other words, there is nothing in the program that knows about being a creature. The program only knows about being a neuron or being a biochemical, and then it is the genetics that tells the program how

usually to wild applause. And everyone's very impressed.

NG: So what are the implications for games? Do we really need AI? Can't AI provide enough different options and fake behavior to the extent that we can't tell they're not real?

Steve: No, humans will always be able to tell the difference, and already computer games have reached the limits of what can be done with AI. Already game programs are too complex and no one is making any real progress. Currently, the robustness of programs is weak, project schedules always slip, and bugs are untraceable — traditional, serial computer science is reaching its limits.

Artificial Life is truly the way forward to achieve "realism." Take a soccer game, for example. They're great fun, but the players don't behave realistically. In theory, there's no reason why we shouldn't model Artificial Life forms of soccer players and have realistic behavior on a soccer field be the consequence.

NG: So will game programmers be able to plug in Artificial Life solutions to their existing programs?

Steve: Yes, it's possible, but it would be better in the long term to start completely from scratch and base all virtual worlds (and games based on such worlds) on this kind of Artificial Life technology. Again, it's working from the bottom up as opposed to the top down.

NG: So what's next for CyberLife after *Creatures*?

Steve: Our long-term goal is based on the assumption that computer games as we know them will be a relatively short-lived phenomenon. As all media tend towards integration online, entertainment will move into being virtual worlds that people want to go and play in. So the future of the entertainment industry is in creating virtual worlds online. Now, the existing game and graphics industry is very good at creating 3D models of what these virtual worlds look like, but the better the graphics get, the more embarrassing the lack of richness in the world's behavior becomes. And I am interested in providing that richness, I am interested in making it a real world.

NG: And Artificial Life will provide this richness?

Steve: Absolutely, but that's not all it can do. The other problem with virtual worlds is that in them everyone wants to be the hero. And yet there has to be people to do the dirty work. Someone has to be the barkerkeeper, the streetcleaner, and yes the cannon fodder for humans to command. No human will want to play these roles, and yet without these characters, the world will appear sterile and unifilelike. The only way to solve this problem satisfactorily is with Artificial Life.

NG: So what's the next step?

Steve: A long way down the line, we've got to be looking at Artificial Life that is as intelligent as humans. I see no theoretical obstruction to simulations of sentient life-forms that think and know of their own existence.

NG: According to science fiction writers everywhere, this business of knowing of their own existence — being "self-aware" — is a big deal, right?

Steve: Well, no one really knows what being "self-aware" means. My creatures are self-aware in that

their brains know that they are bored, or know that they are hungry, or know that they have been hit on the head and it hurts — so they are aware both of the external world and the internal world, so they are self-aware in this sense. But this isn't what we usually mean when we talk of being self-aware. We are always thinking of the little person inside our head who is looking out. But there so clearly isn't one! So it's a big philosophical problem to try and figure out what that means and whether such a structure can emerge.

NG: Are you saying that there is no "self" and that human beings are nothing more than very complicated biochemical machines?

Steve: A human being is just a machine, and so it can be modeled. Certainly I have no doubt that a computer can model any other machine. Whether or not we can ever figure out how to create a model as complex as a human is another question, but technically, there's no reason why it can't be done.

NG: And how long will it take until you are creating Artificial Life that is as sophisticated as a human being?

Steve: Our goal is twenty years. There's a good chance we won't make it, but the road along the way should be very, very interesting. We already have new brain models that are far more sophisticated than the ones used in *Creatures* — it's just a matter of following the steps of evolution.

ng



To call it a driving game is
It's more like a flight



PlayStation and the PlayStation logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. © 1997 Porsche Cars North America, Inc. Porsche and the Porsche Crest are registered trademarks of Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche AG. © 1997 Sony Computer Entertainment Europe.

misleading. simulator.



PORSCHE



Not long ago, Porsche came to us to develop a driving game featuring their new Boxster® automobile. Needless to say, we accepted. So what do you get when you put a bunch of PlayStation™ guys and Porsche guys in a room together? This: the opportunity to take a Porsche Boxster through open-road environments and onto tracks like Stuttgart and stomp on the accelerator until your heart begins to fibrillate. Just try to remember, it's only a game.

PORSCHE[®]
challenge



NEVER UNDERESTIMATE
THE POWER OF PLAYSTATION™

Sega's next generation console: first concrete details of the PowerVR-based system are revealed • **Project X:** the new super console from the designer of Jaguar • **ECTS:** the show across the Atlantic • **Tokyo Game Show:** the show across the Pacific • **3D Studio MAX R2:** first hands-on report • **Plus:** Nintendo's software slips again

news

Essential news and analysis that affect the games you play

Sega's next generation console revealed

As Saturn slowly fades, details on Sega's next console surface



These PowerVR-accelerated shots from Virtua Fighter should give some idea of the performance to be expected from Sega's next console. What these screens don't show is the chip's smooth animation or graphic effects

Sega Dural Specs

CPU: Hitachi SH-4 200MHz
Graphics chip: NEC PowerVR 2 (Highlander)
Sound chip: Yamaha ARM7-based ASIC with 64 simultaneous voices
Main RAM: 8MB
Video/texture RAM: 8MB
Audio RAM: 2MB
Caches: 8K instruction, 16K data, 128K CD-ROM buffer
Output: VGA and 640 x 320 anti-aliased RF

Other features:

- 12x CD-ROM drive
- 16GB super dense CD format
- Serial port for PCMCIA modems
- Flash RAM carts for data storage

Sega's next entry into the console wars will be crucial to its future; simply put, the company's future in consumer hardware depends on it.

After achieving surprising success with the underpowered Genesis system, the company has misstepped three straight times with new hardware. The Sega CD and 32X were notable only for their failures, and the Saturn never really managed to thrive.

The goal for the company now is to create a system that hits the market early without getting overshadowed by future consoles. To ensure this, Sega worked with three different forces to build a strong contender in the new wave

of consoles. Sega of Japan developed an NEC/PowerVR system (Dural) while Sega of America worked on a 3DO-based system of its own (Black Belt). Sega also worked with Microsoft to create a developer-friendly atmosphere for both systems.

After some serious backroom negotiations by NEC, the Black Belt was discarded in favor of Dural. This prompted 3DO to file suit against Sega and sent the entire Sega of America hardware development team to the front office with resignations in hand.

The Japanese system that emerged victorious, though, is a truly amazing piece of technology. The system will run on the 200MHz

SH4 chip from Hitachi. Its graphics are rendered by the PowerVR 2, which can produce an amazing 1.5 million polygons per second with mip-mapping and texture filtering. The chipset also enables hardware fogging, lights, shadows, and more.

The sound is based on a dedicated Yamaha chip capable of producing 64 simultaneous voices. For its media drive the company has gone an unconventional route by using a dual speed system that can read regular CDs and Dual-specific 128GB super-density discs. Also, the console will include support for a modem card, but it is unclear whether it will be standard or an add-on.

Determined not to make the same mistake it did with Saturn, Sega has focused on making its programming libraries accessible to ensure developer support. The new system will use Microsoft development tools, and the PowerVR chip (which supports both OpenGL and Direct3D) should make PC and arcade ports simple.

Sega's new system will be the first true step forward towards the next generation of videogame consoles when it is released in late 1998. How Sega uses this early leg up on the competition will very likely determine the future of the company as a mass-market hardware manufacturer. More details on the system will follow next month.



Project X: A Mario killer in the making

Details emerge on the next generation of game consoles

Details have reached **Next Generation** of new graphics technology that could send shockwaves through the videogame industry. VM Labs is a U.S. company working on advanced, games-related silicon technology that is thought to be firmly at the apex of realtime visualization.

Although no firm proof has yet come to light, **Next Generation** believes that at the heart of this clandestine project are two of the most talented and experienced designers in the videogame industry — hardware guru Richard Miller and renowned techno-hippie Jeff Minter.

Miller created much of the groundbreaking chip technology for the Sinclair ZX Spectrum in the early 1980s and later became head of R&D for Atari in the U.S., going on to create the impressive chipset for the jaguar. It was the utter lack of a development system that hurt the jag. Programmer and designer Minter, meanwhile, is a resolute non-conformist and technical games wizard. The two have worked together at Atari's U.S. facility in the past, although Minter has just moved back to his hometown in Wales to continue



VM Labs is publicizing "Project X" on its web site (www.vmlabs.com). It doesn't take a genius to figure out that Jaguar designer Richard Miller hopes the technology will form the heart of a Nintendo 64 killer

work on the project.

Codename "Project X," the technology is currently shrouded in secrecy, but messages on Minter's own web site, yak's Zoo (www.magicnet.net/~yak/zoo.html), suggest a breakthrough: "I have begun to explore incredible new spaces, and the possibilities just stagger me... I have only just begun to lightly tickle the surface of what this thing can do. My chin is bruised from the number of times my jaw has hit the floor. The

potential for algorithmic graphics on this thing is just mind-melting. Talk about machines of loving grace... X is beautiful just beautiful." He goes on to talk about imagery, including "a receding plain of liquid pyramids."

Minter's penchant for the more psychedelically tinged side of life may lead some to be cynical about such musings, yet the track record of both parties is unquestionable. We hope to have more information soon.

ng

Who is it?

He moved his daughter's crib from her bedroom to the living room so he could use her room to create his first major video arcade game effort. Later, he sold out for millions of dollars to Warner Communications and went on to start Chuck E. Cheese's Pizza Time Theaters. Name the game too.



VM Labs founder Richard Miller is an associate of Jeff Minter (left), the llama-obsessed coder who is working with technology whose specs are believed to be well in excess of the canned M2 system.



Tokyo catches gaming hysteria

Tokyo Game Show packs in consumers with hundreds of new titles



Konami's G.A.S.P. (top) was one of a number of new 3D fighters for the game-starved N64. Setai's *Rev Limit* puts *Ridge Racer* to shame

Roughly an hour's ride from the center of downtown Tokyo, the Makuhari Messe convention center was the site of the Autumn Tokyo Game Show.

Despite having only about a quarter of the square footage of E3, the Tokyo Game Show managed to pack in nearly twice as many attendees in one day as E3 did over the course of three days. The difference is that Tokyo Game Show's focus is entirely on games and the consumer (given that two of the three days are open to the public) instead of E3's focus on companies, the industry, and selling to retailers.

There is little doubt that Sony's machine was the dominant platform of the show, with more than 80% of all titles being shown running on PlayStation. Square's booth was easily the most impressive, *Examiner*, *Front Mission Alternative*, and *Front Mission 2* were shown in playable form, wowing show-goers. Nonplayable presentations of *Parasite Eve*, *Chocobo's Mysterious Dungeon*, and *Sokage* (which resembled Bushido Blade in an action/adventure with



Eager gamers braved the heat and humidity of the packed but non-air-conditioned convention center for their chance to play new games

magic) provided further reason to be excited for the future of Square. Hudson also turned some heads with its first PlayStation title, a 3D fighter titled *Bloody Rose* (which currently has a working title of *Beastinator* in the U.S.), where characters can transform from buff humans into raging animals. A little-known team called Easystaff was showing an impressive strategy/RPG in the form of *Brigandine*, a game that should satisfy fans of *Military Madness* or *Iron Storm*.

Saturn also had a surprisingly strong showing, given its moribund status in the States. Notable titles included *Burning Rangers* from *Yuu Naka* (*Sonic* fame) and *Tecmo's Dead or Alive*. Sega also showed Saturn versions of *Sega Touring Car* and a massively updated version of *Sonic R*, a new racing title featuring *Sega's* mascot with an "attitude." Hudson's booth also

provided the surprising *Bomberman 2* for saturn, which boasted polygonal environments using many of the same play mechanics as Hudson's forthcoming *Bomberman 64*.

While N64 continues to lag behind the 32-bit platforms' sales in Japan, third parties in Japan seem to have finally picked up the pace of development, with many new titles being showcased. Imagineer showed an impressive 3D fighter currently titled *Fighting Cup*, while Setai publicized its two games, *Wild Choppers* and *Rev Limit* (each of which is to be published by Nintendo of America by year's end). Konami showcased its version of *In the Zone 64*, as well as a new but early 3D fighter called *G.A.S.P.*

While not expected to ever become the industry showcase that is E3, the Tokyo Game Show was even larger this year than it was last and promises to become more influential next year.

It is ...

Holas Bushnell, father of the videogame industry. The game he worked on in his daughter's room was *Computer Space*, an arcade version of Steve Russell's *Spacewar*. Nutting Associates released the game, which flopped. Bushnell formed Atari to release his next game, *Pong*.



Namco announced its new *Chronicle* boxed set that will include all six Namco classics collections, as well as its latest offering, *Namco Classics Encore* (which was unveiled at the show), all for about \$50.

In other games you kill your enemies.
In Oddworld, you make them do the killing for you.

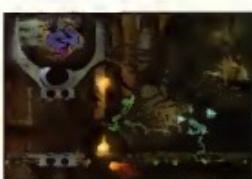


Got some nasties to off? Why get your hands dirty? Possess one of them and let him do the blasting for you.

Sound Odd? Welcome to Oddworld.



see the slug. be the slug.



a quantum leap in gameplay.



it's a hostile takeover.

A.L.I.V.E.
Aware Lifeforms In
Virtual Entertainment



**ODDWORLD
INHABITANTS**
www.oddworld.com



**GT Interactive
Software**
www.gtinteractive.com

Oddworld Inhabitants Aka's Oddysee™ & © 1997 Oddworld Inhabitants, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Published and distributed by GT Interactive Software Corp. PlayStation and the PlayStation Logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment, Inc. Microsoft® and Windows® are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. All other trademarks are property of their respective companies.

An irregular look inside the heads of some of the world's leading videogame designers

ECTS shows off everyone's true colors

Colin Campbell reports from Europe's largest game show

Nothing could have illustrated the profound differences between Nintendo and Sony more effectively than London game industry trade show ECTS. Sony sees the world as a big round ball. Nintendo views it as a line heading due West from Tokyo.

Sony's stand reflected its image in Europe, which is much like its image in North America, yet more so. Pick any of the next few words — savvy, global, cool, smart, wise, deliberate — and they add up to the most important word, which is "winning."

Here was a company that showed its dominance of the market with dozens of games, spanning all manner of new and old genres. Sony's stand could have been an exhibition all in itself. It felt like some effort had been made by the firm, which loves to show off its own sense of being, of self-awareness and control.

In contrast, Nintendo's booth was poor. I left with the impression that the biggest game on the stand was ancient racer Mario Kart, with a guest appearance by GoldenEye. Despite Europe's general fondness for Nintendo, it does not like its loyalty to be rewarded with indifference bordering on arrogance. Sony, realizing that Europe could soon be the largest market in the world, has sent some of its best people there to woo this fractured populace. Nintendo evidently feels that Europe is some place between New York and Bombay.

Chris Deering heads up the European PlayStation operation and is probably the smartest Westerner pushing Sony's console. His keynote speech offered the prospect of a console market every bit as big as the market for VCRs. He spoke of the self-evidence of consoles not competing with PCs before delivering a crushing verdict on the increasingly troubled PC game market. He barely bothered to talk about carts versus CDs or quantity versus quality or any of the other rhetorical gambits favored by Sony and Nintendo execs in more closely contested arenas.

But this was not just a show about global culture. It was also a celebration of local talent. We Brits live on a small island and have been suffering from the slowly deflating sensation of a punctured reputation since the days of Jefferson. So, when we're doing good, we don't waste much time braying about it. In the game industry this has created the phrase "Britsoft," which loosely

Q: What can you boast about in *Legend of Zelda 64*?

Shigeru Miyamoto: I've always tried to create places in videogames that don't exist in the real world. You might even feel like you've actually been there. And these thoughts and feelings, they find a shape, one by one. You can get into the game if you turn off the music. And if you turn off the music, you might start crying because of fear — dungeons contain lots of traps and are really scary. You might want to curse the person who created the dungeon. Maybe you will have a nightmare later.

Q: What about special effects in the game?

SM: If you walk in 3D, you can see a horse in the distance, then you can change the camera angle and ride the horse and run ... but maybe you will have fun just seeing the horse coming towards you.

translates to the sound of pasty-faced men petting themselves on the back.

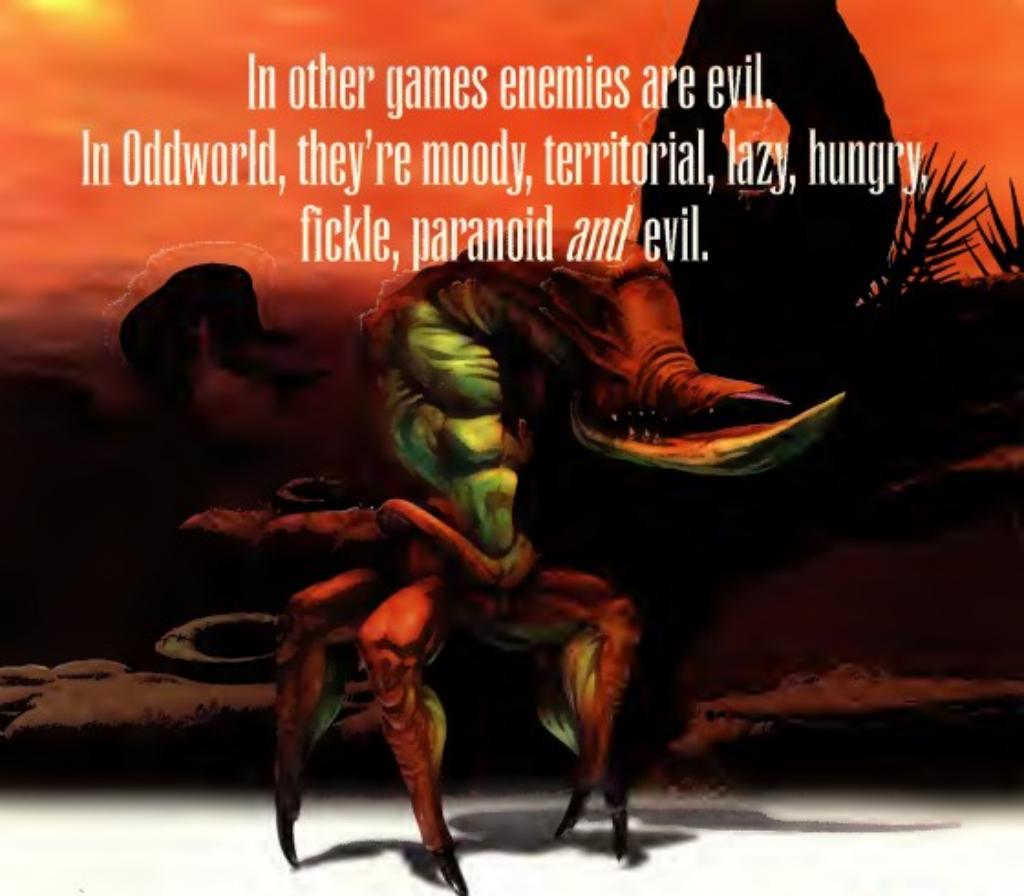
The evidence is all there: Rare, Psygnosis, Core, Argonaut, Bullfrog, DMA, Paul Finnegan at Rare thinks it has something to do with an "adventurous spirit" among U.K. developers; Jeremy Smith at Core reckons the Brits can "get code to do things more efficiently" than Americans. Jez San at Argonaut thinks Britain's terrible weather has produced a generation of kids who'd rather code than go outside. How this explains some of the world's finest soccer players is unclear.

It all boils down to two facts: 1) Sure the Brits make some good games; 2) We should stick to coding and leave the self-serving introspection well alone.



Japan has Tokyo Game Show, North America has E3, and Europe has ECTS. This year, patriotism in the form of "Britsoft" was the hot topic

In other games enemies are evil.
In Oddworld, they're moody, territorial, lazy, hungry,
fickle, paranoid *and* evil.



If you don't know what makes other characters tick, they just might explode.

Sound Odd? Welcome to Oddworld.



scrabs ahoy!



paramites on the prowl.



every slog will have his day.

A.L.I.V.E.
Aware Lifeforms In
Virtual Entertainment



Strategy Guide
available from

**ODDWORLD
INHABITANTS**
www.oddworld.com



Gt
Gt Interactive
Software
www.gtinteractive.com

©1997 Oddworld Inhabitants, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Published and distributed by Gt Interactive Software Corp. PlayStation and the PlayStation Logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft and Windows are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. All other trademarks are property of their respective companies.

breaking

Nintendo dealt blow

Company sees delays, licensing problems

Last year's late September launch for Nintendo 64 was both good and bad for the company. While the proximity to Christmas did wonders for sales of the first true 64-bit system, a lack of inventory undercut Nintendo's plans for a return to holiday domination in the videogame market. Many industry insiders predicted that Nintendo would not make the same mistake twice, and that this Christmas would find Nintendo number one in the market. However, if the last two months are any indication, then Nintendo's plans may be for naught — several key games have been delayed (Ghosts 64, Banjo-Kazooie, and Conker's Quest), and its European licensing contract is being restructured. Banjo-Kazooie, Nintendo's flagship title at E3, and Conker's Quest (both covered in **NG** 34) are being developed by Rare. With the announcement of their delays, along with Zelda's delay, a mere two major titles that were showcased at Nintendo's E3 booth will be available this Christmas (Goldeneye and Tempestphere), both of which were released a full four months before the holiday. Nintendo has thrown the public a bone called Diddy Kong Racing (already being called "Ditty Kart" by the cynical), another Rare effort that is uncomfortably similar to Mario Kart.

These delays came hot on the heels of a major victory for Nintendo 64 developers across the world, as the European Economic Community's strict competition laws forced Nintendo to drastically rework its notorious third-party licensing contracts. A press release issued by the EEC stated, "Under the new agreement, there are no longer limits on the number of games that a Nintendo licensee may release on the market, and prior approvals by Nintendo are no longer required, until and unless a Nintendo licensee elects to use a Nintendo trademark for a given game." In addition, the agreement no longer contractually requires that licensees' games be exclusively manufactured by Nintendo.*

This issue first came to light during the golden age of NES, when Atari Games formed Tengen, tried to take on Nintendo, and

lost badly. But the EEC comes considerably more about to dilute the dictatorial policies of Nintendo.

Expect this decision to have many effects. First, consumers can expect cheaper games in the UK, France, and other EEC countries. Second, Nintendo will likely become stronger in granting licensing agreements to third parties in those regions. Finally, expect a grey market to appear if European prices are significantly lower than those in the US.



Rare's Diddy Kong Racing may be OK, but it's too close to Mario Kart, too soon

ng

In the

Studio

Development news as it develops

LucasArts has confirmed that it has begun development on games based on the Lucasfilm prequels to the *Star Wars* trilogy. Episode I of the prequel films has already begun shooting on a locked-down set in London's Leavesden Studios. The games will be developed as cross-platform, for consoles and PC, and are expected to be available close to the launch of the first film, estimated to be released in May of 1999. It is unknown what genre

these games will fall into, or if the console versions will appear on Sony's or Sega's next systems, which are likely to release within the same time frame.

Described as "in the upcoming Star Wars Episode I, this tank could very well be seen in a scene."

Changes on *Pac-Man Ghost Zone*, Namco's first U.S.-developed PlayStation title, have delayed the project past Christmas for a release

sometime later in '98. Since its premier preview in NG 32, Project Manager Bill Anderson, along with many of the artists and programmers, have been laid off. This came just as Jesse Taylor, most recently at Virgin Interactive, began his tenure as Namco HomeNet's new director of research and development. A spokesperson for the company reaffirmed that much of the original team is still in place, and because *Pac-Man* is Namco's corporate icon, the company needs the extra time to absolutely make sure the product is a strong one.

As reported last issue, Vancouver-based Radical Entertainment has set up an office in San Francisco. While the company failed to make a formal announcement before press time, reliable word in the development community was that Radical would announce some type of publishing partnership with Disney Interactive. This would certainly end the company's current development deals with other publishers, specifically Virgin Interactive on the *AVL Powerplay* series.

Diablo 2 is under development for a Q3 1998 launch, according to Blizzard. Although no screens are available yet, we do have a preliminary character sketch. The project's main changes include a beefed-up one-player mode, tweaked graphics engine, and, we hope, a cheat-proof way of playing over Battle.net, Blizzard's proprietary online gaming service. Watch for details in a future issue.



Other games talk about their characters, Oddworld's characters speak for themselves.



In a lush world of diabolical danger, you're Abe... the skinny guy with no weapons.

Your mission is simple...run, jump and talk your way out of this ravaged world.

You heard me.... Talk! With just your D-pad or keyboard and your brain. It's called Gamespeak.



And when you've got an entire race to save from the deli counter it could come in handy.

For Odd's sake, do something different. Chow down on ODDWORLD's pure nugget of surreal, sensory overload gaming.

You'll never be hungry again.

ODDWORLD: ABE'S ODDYSEE

GAMING GETS ODD

A.L.I.V.E.
Aware Lifeforms In
Virtual Entertainment



ODDWORLD
INHABITANTS
www.oddworld.com



G
GT Interactive Software
www.gtiinteractive.com

Oddworld Inhabitants Abe's Oddysee™ & © 1997 Oddworld Inhabitants, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Published and distributed by GT Interactive Software Corp. PlayStation and the PlayStation Logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft® and Windows® are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. All other trademarks are property of their respective companies.

Gadget

Adrenaline Rush

Price:	\$915
Manufacturer:	Jazz Multimedia
System:	PC

Jazz Multimedia's Adrenaline Rush card is the second major card (after the Stingray 3D/3D from Hercules) to pair the Alliance ProMotion AT3D 3D/3D graphics with the 3Dfx Voodoo Rush chipset. The board offers an efficient and high-performance alternative to the standard two card 3Dfx setup.

The Rush chip was designed from the beginning to work together with 2D-chipsets for a complete 2D/3D solution. Because of the shared frame buffer, the chipset can perform a few tricks that the standard Voodoo Graphics can't, such as 3D acceleration in a window. However, according to 3Dfx, Rush offers no performance-related increases over the original. And indeed, the card we tested

offered comparable performance in 3D acceleration.

On the other hand, Voodoo Rush is not fully compatible with the original Voodoo Graphics either, and many games are not yet ready for the chipset. While patches for most of these titles are on the way, and native support will be included with newer games, players may find themselves occasionally frustrated by incompatibilities with older 3Dfx-native titles they already own or plan to buy. Direct3D games, however, like Moto Racer GP, will still run extremely well on the card, giving players a bit of a wider assortment of software to choose from.

But perhaps the best advantage of this card is Jazz Multimedia's pricing strategy. The complete 2D/3D card carries a \$245 suggested retail price, but that's likely to drop below \$200 once it hits the streets. To add to the bargain, three major titles will be packed in with the card: *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter*, *MechWarrior 2: Mercenaries*, and *Interstate '76*.



Jazz Multimedia's Adrenaline Rush board offers affordable 2D and 3D acceleration on one card

Compared to its immediate competitor, the Hercules Stingray 3D/3D, the Adrenaline Rush offers slightly better performance and better drivers at a lower price point. For those looking at an affordable single card solution, jazz Multimedia just may have the answer.

Eagle Max

Price:	\$39
Manufacturer:	Act Labs
System:	PlayStation

Leaping into the analog race, Act Labs has released the Eagle Max, the first third-party joystick compatible with Sony's dual analog joystick standard. And as anyone who reads Next Generation might expect, clearly we're excited by any new such controller. However, after racking the stick for a quick spin, we're left feeling somewhat limited.

On the up side, the Eagle Max offers three modes of operation: analog, digital, and "wheel," with the latter being a separate analog mode, which is customized for using the stick as a steering wheel in driving games. It features four user-programmable buttons, which can store button combos



Act Labs' Eagle Max analog joystick is great for flight sim fans — everyone else can steer clear

of up to 16 moves, and players can program in four different sets of combos for four different games, and select

between them at the flip of a switch. Programming is straightforward in concept if a bit clumsy in execution, since users have to hold the button+joystick position, then press another button to record it. For certain complex combinations, a friend may be required to tap the entry button.

For all the bells and whistles, however, the Eagle Max is clearly intended for flight game enthusiasts and almost no one else. The left-hand stick on the Sony dual analog pad is replaced here by a throttle wheel and rocker arm, which take over the individual functions of up/down and left/right, respectively. This is a fine configuration for compatible flight games, but obviously not much good for just about any other kind of game that uses two analog sticks (including Shiny Entertainment's forthcoming RC helicopter sim, *Fly by Wire*). Of course, if all you're looking for is a standard flight stick, that may not be a bad thing.

*Why merely possess
a game when you
can* **OWN IT?**



Simply put, games are meant to be dominated, not merely played. And though practice may eventually get you to perfection, the Microsoft® SideWinder® Precision Pro will get you there a lot quicker.

And with the new ergonomically designed stick, buttons, are at your fingertips and right under your thumb. You know, the same place you wish your games were.

With Microsoft SideWinder Precision Pro you get:

- patented digital-optical technology
- unbeatable accuracy and reliability with no actual wear and tear
- shift button to double functions
- map specific keystrokes, maneuvers, and strings
- 30 pre-loaded game profiles
- on-handle rotation control

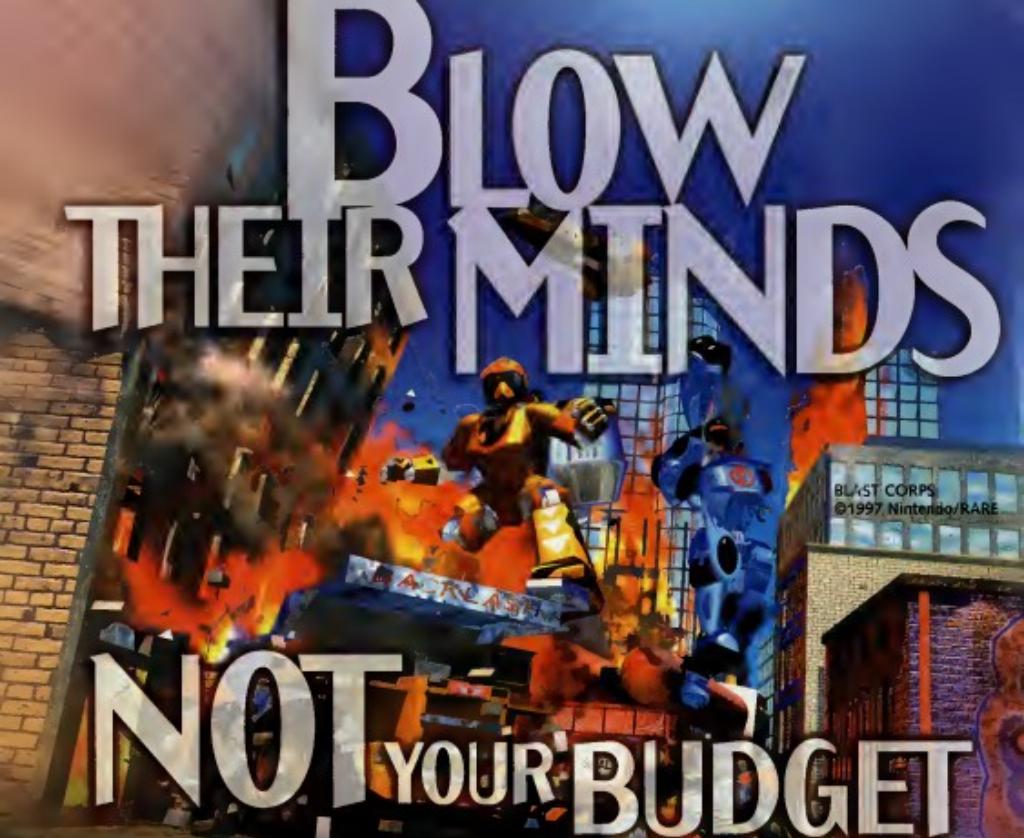
Microsoft

Where do you want to go today?™

www.microsoft.com/sidewinder

MICROSOFT
SIDEWINDER
Precision Pro

BLOW THEIR MINDS



BLAST CORPS
©1997, Nintendo/RARE

NOT YOUR BUDGET

Alias|Wavefront's PowerAnimator™ is the tool for creating the industry's fastest, perfectly textured, real time, so-good-you-can't-tell-they're-polygon video games.

Oz™ is the only workstation that's built on an innovative Unified Memory Architecture, delivering leading CPU and graphics performance as well as breakthrough video and imaging capabilities. Check the specs – Oz gives you the most raw horsepower of any workstation in its class.



**NOW
\$14,995**

Don't settle for a system that slows you down. Or won't grow with your needs. Or can't deliver the realism that audiences expect.

Get PowerAnimator and Oz for a total system price of just \$14,995* and blow their minds, not your budget.

Alias|wavefront

A Silicon Graphics Company

*All prices are in US dollars and available in North America only. Offer available for a limited time.

For more information call 1.800.447.2542 or visit our web site at www.aw.sgi.com

TM and © 1997 Alias|Wavefront Inc. All rights reserved.
Alias, Wavefront, and PowerAnimator are trademarks of Alias|Wavefront, a division of Silicon Graphics Inc.
Oz is a trademark of SGI Inc. and SGI is a trade name of Silicon Graphics Inc.

Toolbox

The products that build your favorite games

3D Studio MAX R2

To say that 3D Studio MAX has had a large impact on the game industry is a bit like saying the Pacific is a large ocean. Upon its release in April of last year, it quickly became one of the most popular — some would argue the most popular — 3D modeling and animation package among game artists and designers. And with good reason: It remains among the most flexible and full-featured 3D programs available, and at \$3,495 per license, can be had for less than half the price of its closest competitor, Microsoft's Softimage.

For version R2, the programmers of Kinetix have added "over a thousand new features and enhancements," small and large. The user interface looks essentially the same but adds a few important twists like additional call-out submenus and the ability to customize display colors. Overall, R2 display screens offer the general impression of giving more information and a greater wealth of options. The Materials Editor, for example, now enables the user to work on 24 materials at a time, up from six in the original MAX — saving no end of time shuffling materials in and out — and adds the capability to drag and drop textures and materials directly onto objects within the scene.

MAX R2 expands on so many features from the original, there's simply no way to list them all. A few highlights: A new class of "enhanced" geometric primitives have been added, including things like doors and windows. A much more comprehensive set of particle generators can be

selected, and user-defined geometry can be substituted for particles (ever seen a fountain that sprayed elephants?). New video effects, including various kinds of glowing halos and a pretty comprehensive lens flare system — the special effect most in vogue right now — have been added to post processing.

The most important and exciting additions, however, add completely new functionality. MAX R2 supports NURBS surfaces and editing, previously available only as a plug-in. Further, polygonal primitives can be converted into NURBS and joined with other NURBS surfaces.

R2 also adds raytracing to its scanline renderer. However, what makes it truly interesting is that it's a selective raytracer — "raytrace" is a material or texture type that is mapped onto individual objects and can be controlled and modified like any other material. This gives the user a great deal of flexibility in creating reflective or transparent objects. Also, in addition to Phong shading, R2 supports Blinn shading.

On the animation side, R2 includes a new dynamics engine, a well-integrated and functional physics model for automating collision detection, bouncing, sliding, and so on. Although traditional keyframing is, of course, always an option, it's a kick to set up a system of objects, add gravity, and see what happens.

Which brings us to the single most "geekish" feature of MAX R2: MAXScript. MAXScript is R2's new scripting language, similar in syntax to LISP, which can be used to control any function within the program. At its base level,

With Kinetix's latest rev of its popular 3D modeling and animation package, the best just got better



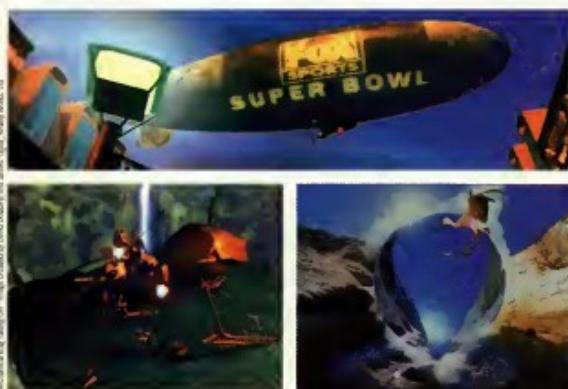
Westwood used 3D Studio MAX to create most of the art for *Blade Runner*

this allows users to create macros, so for example, the steps of creating a complex shape can be preprogrammed and assigned to a single button stroke. However, a demo AVI showed to *Next Generation* used a MAXScript routine to perform edge detection within a videotaped scene, then used this to position a 3D model within the scene. The possibilities are endless and a bit mind-boggling.

In the end, there simply isn't enough room on this page to cover just what's new in MAX R2, much less every feature included in the package. Suffice it to say 3D Studio MAX R2 is one of the most comprehensive, full-featured, flexible, and easy-to-use (relatively speaking, of course — as with any package this complex, learning to navigate can take time. However, it's as easy as it can be, which says a lot) 3D modeling and animation packages available. Get the picture?



© 1997 Westwood Studios Inc. All rights reserved. MAX is a registered trademark of Kinetix Inc. MAXR2 is a trademark of Kinetix Inc. MAXScript is a trademark of Kinetix Inc. MAX is a registered trademark of Kinetix Inc. MAXR2 is a trademark of Kinetix Inc. MAXScript is a trademark of Kinetix Inc.



Rezne's Super Bowl Opening (top). Reality Works' Mechanical Bug (above left) uses MAX R2's new NURBS surfaces. Berlin and Manahan's The Vortex (above right) shows raytracing

Visit [Next Generation Online](http://www.next-generation.com/), the #1 computer and videogame web site at <http://www.next-generation.com/>

Joyriding

Gaming on the Internet

Back in 1993, if you wanted to play fast-paced multiplayer games, the only way to do it was over a LAN, and the game to play was, of course, Doom. It was the multiplayer gaming explosion started by Doom that caused Bob Huntley to take a look at the potential of multiplayer games as a "replacement for television." To this end, he used the most accessible technologies available to form Dwango (Dial-up Wide Area Network Gaming Online). "I like being in the market first, as long as I'm not

help Dwango with a tailored version of Quake, Dwango has hired the same person that made Doom run on Dwango to do the necessary network code modifications to the ultra-popular game.

Dwango is betting heavily on its partnership with Microsoft's Internet Gaming Zone. Huntley explained the partnership's strategy as a three-tiered approach. The first level is "free gaming," where matching for retail games is provided for free as are simple games like cards and checkers. A current

by Christian Svensson

Christian Svensson is the editor of Next Generation Online



With key partners like Microsoft, the online gaming pioneer is likely to rise again

too early," says Huntley. Unfortunately, Dwango may have indeed been just a little too early, and in the face of exclusive grabbing services like TEN, it is already seen by some as a "has been." But with key partners like Microsoft, the online gaming pioneer may still become a major player.

Dwango's strategy was to set up game servers in major markets around the country that people dial into to play games like Doom and Descent. But since the launch of the service, there has been little content added, despite Dwango's expansion into Japan, Singapore, and soon Korea and England.

"Admittedly, we've gotten a little stale in the last year or so. We've been focusing on more of the technology than on the content for now, but that's going to change soon," says Huntley. "At the time we started it, we didn't predict the explosion of the Net. At the same time, by staying with our path, we don't have a lot of the problems associated with TCP/IP." The problems Huntley is primarily referring to involve competition for bandwidth and issues of latency. By using the telephone system as its means of entry and transmission, Dwango offers local players guaranteed latencies of about 70ms (or less), says Huntley. Comparing that to the average online gaming service, which would consider 150ms latency outstanding performance, it should be apparent that what Dwango currently lacks in content, it has so far made up for in performance.

On the content side, Huntley says that Quake will be up and running on Dwango by the end of the year. Other content deals, resulting from a part of its agreement with Microsoft's Internet Gaming Zone, are also supposedly well in the works. Since Id Software hasn't had the time or inclination to



Microsoft currently faces the same problem as Dwango: no killer content

example of this setup is the Zone's support of LucasArts' X-Wing vs. Tie Fighter. The second tier is the online-only content like Microsoft's forthcoming Fighter Ace and Asheron's Call. Players are billed for these games. The third and final tier, which is where Dwango fits in, is a premium performance network where an hourly charge is assessed for usage.

Huntley estimates that Dwango will be profitable if as few as 50,000 users are driven to the service via the Zone. Unlike TEN or MPPlayer, Dwango has few employees and low fixed costs thanks to a meager network infrastructure (each of the local servers is stand-alone and not interconnected), says Huntley. "If we can capture 10% of the Zone's membership we would be happy." Microsoft currently touts more than 350,000 registered users, which would make it the front-runner

in terms of user base among major online services. Still, Microsoft currently faces the same problem as Dwango: no killer content — a problem that both Microsoft and Huntley promise is being addressed. But Huntley isn't convinced that any service (or the industry as a whole) has the "proper" content just yet. "The content has to mature," says Huntley. "If content drives the audience size, it's going to take some time still before the developers actually catch up."

Dwango's newest revenue plan kills its subscription model and reverts back to an hourly charge of 99 cents. Given Engage's recent difficulties convincing its audience to pay an hourly rate, even with decent content (e.g., Warcraft 2) and equally powerful partners (AOL, EarthLink, CompuServe), what makes Huntley think Dwango can make it work? According to Huntley, it all comes down to performance. "With our lower latencies we can take advantage of DirectPlay's [the networking API for Microsoft's DirectX] broadcasting modes, allowing us to add more players while still offering superior

performance." Dwango hopes to demonstrate these capabilities with forthcoming racing games (which typically need sub-100ms latencies to be playable), like Microsoft's CART title and possible Sega racers like Daytona Deluxe.

Looking to the future, Huntley hopes to establish Dwango as a "leader in real-time gameplay networks," culminating in the interconnection of its servers (for nationwide gameplay and chat) within the next two years. Time will tell how successful Dwango becomes in the face of its TCP/IP-based competitors and its current trans-Atlantic rival, British Telecom's Wireplay. But with partners like Microsoft footing much of the marketing bill as well as providing clout for obtaining content, it's likely to be some time, if ever, before we see Dwango turn tail and run.



Featuring The Voices Of

ELIZABETH BERKLEY

KIEFER SUTHERLAND

in HIROYUKI OCHI'S ANIMATED FILM

ARMITAGE III™ THE THIRD POLY-MATRIX THE MOVIE

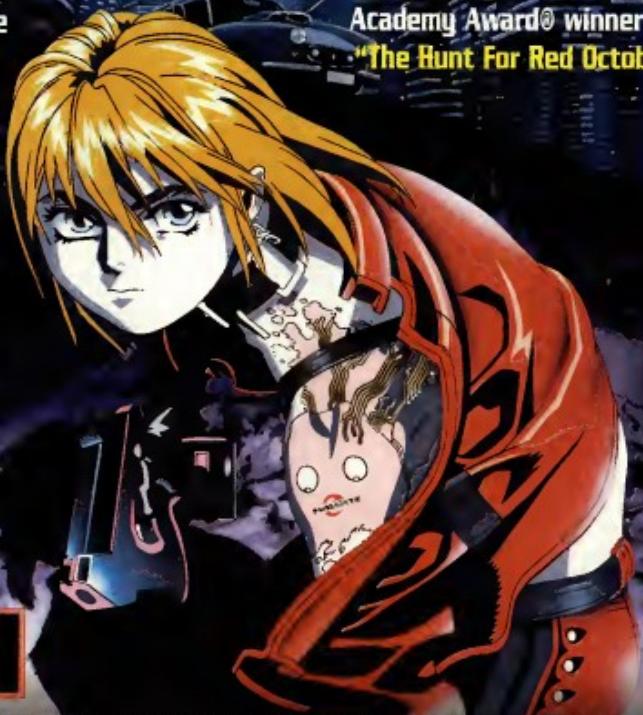
The biggest animated feature film from Japan since "Ghost In The Shell"*

Sound design by Frank Serafine, Academy Award® winner for "The Hunt For Red October"

ONLY
\$19.98!
VHS

ON SALE
EVERYWHERE!

DVD - \$29.98 !
Laserdisc - \$29.98 !
CD Soundtrack - \$15.98 !



PIONEER ENTERTAINMENT (USA) and PIONEER LDC Present An AIC Production & HIROYUKI OCHI'S Animated Film

ELIZABETH BERKLEY

ARMITAGE III

KIEFER SUTHERLAND

Sound Designer FRANK SERAFINE Supervising Sound Editor LES CLAYPOOL III Music by HIROYUKI NAMBA

Production Supervisor & Art Director KEVIN SEYMOUR US Video Producer YUJI MORIYA

Executive Producers TARO MAKI • TORU MIURA • NAOUJI NAKAMURA Written By CHIAKI KONAKA

Directed & Created by HIROYUKI OCHI

PIONEER
The Art of Entertainment

* AVAILABLE ON PIONEER LASERDISC

© 1997 AIC • PIONEER LDC, INC. • PIONEER ENTERTAINMENT (USA) L.P.

For more information visit our website: www.pioneer-ent.com

Imagine the possibilities

Imagine what you could do with ASCIIWARE's new, revolutionary one-handed controller-- the ASCII Grip™.

Designed to maximize comfort and ease-of-use while playing role-playing, simulation, sport and strategy games, the Grip will amaze you and your friends to no end.

Now you can choose your best gaming position. Kick back. Switch hands.

Free yourself.

It's the most relaxing and comfortable way to play your favorite games. Imagine the endless possibilities.

Imagine what you could do with ASCIIWARE's first one-handed controller designed for role-playing, simulation, sport and strategy games. Ergonomic design maximizes player flexibility and comfort. Programmable buttons for ease-of-use. Excellent for both left or right-handed players.

The Grip™ by ASCIIWARE™.

Play your best hand.



ASCIIWARE™



PlayStation® and the PlayStation logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc.

www.asciiclient.com



Movers and Shakers

The business news that affects the games you play



Welcome to a media event, courtesy of Sony Computer Entertainment America. No fault to SCEA for publicizing the early launch of FFVII, but shame on anyone who reported it as real news

The press vs. spin doctors

It is a good thing for Sony that the game press is, on the whole, so gloriously gullible. The recent spectacle of the game media swallowing the story of its "shocking decision" to release *Final Fantasy VII* into the market a few days early due to crushing demand was a sign of these topsy-turvy times. Dem-witted and lazy auto-hackney is now the norm among game journos who are paid to be skeptical.

We were supposed to believe that Sony's heroic decision to let us get at our copies of *Final Fantasy VII* a few days early was due to bone-crunching public demand. Very few had the gall to point out that the whole thing was probably cooked up well in advance, with the express aim not so much of satisfying public demand, but instead, generating more of it.

There is nothing wrong with attempting to manipulate the media. Sony's media man-handlers cannot be blamed for doing what they are paid to do. But the media should be asking questions of themselves for singularly failing to say, "Hang on, is this really what it seems? Is there an angle here we are missing?"

OK, so a few games hitting homes a couple of days early is not the material for budding Pulitzer Prize winners. There are more important things in the world to worry about. But since we're talking about the business of games, let's at least try to get it right, and not just in this instance, but in all press coverage.

One publicity person has been quoted (off the record, naturally) as stating that the companies he represents are more important than the press and therefore, the press should be more respectful. As a game consumer, you should not care so much for the likes of game writers (who all enjoy a pretty comfortable

existence) as much as the knock-on effect this self-important attitude has for the public.

The bottom line here is that journalists represent the consumer. They make judgments on behalf of their readers if they are not an independent press and a free-thinking press, they are cheating the people who have allowed them to enjoy pretty damned good jobs. If they are too cowed to ask damning questions or reveal inside information, they are not fulfilling their function. If they will happily reprint the sly concoctions of PR folk, they might just as well be honest with themselves and go work for a hardware manufacturer or software house.

The first people in positions of power to stand up and say, "I believe in a free press as much as the next person," are almost always the very same people who call up magazine editors trying to get damaging reviews or news stories pulled. Software publishers, without exception, are not in the business of truth and justice. They are in the business of selling games. Frankly, they are not to be trusted.

Our game writers are in the business of getting their magazines sold, and the only way to do that in the long term is to earn the trust of their readers. Readers are more clever than marketing types give them credit for. Sooner or later they know when they are being fooled. They will only buy so many concocted events or overly careful reviews. They will not tolerate a media that allow themselves to be so easily used.

From the biggest game review to the smallest PR-generated story, the game press should always behave as representatives of the public. There is no cozy compromise here. No give and take. They should not give a stuff for the interests of greedy shareholders or Machiavellian marketing mandarins.

by Colin Campbell

Colin Campbell is Next Generation's international correspondent



Sega vs. 3Dfx

When hardware manufacturers go to war, lawyers can look forward to up to a decade's worth of business. Whether it's Atari or Nintendo or Microsoft or Apple, the result is always the same — long, drawn out, and extremely complicated.

Software publishers argue about interesting stuff like how such and such a platform-leaping squirrel is related to such and such a vine-swinging hippo. But hardware folk argue about perplexing engineering stuff.

The software folk get over their tiffs within six months. It often turns out that the hippo and the squirrel are in no way involved and that the whole thing was a silly misunderstanding. In hardware, it takes longer. Sega's response to 3Dfx's lawsuit could be even more complicated than usual because Sega, hilariously, owns a significant chunk of 3Dfx.

What happens at the 3Dfx shareholder meetings? Does Mr. Ballard nervously shuffle in his chair when the subject of Sega comes around? "I'm terribly sorry, Mr. Stolar. Do you think you could just go make some coffee while we work out how to wring millions of dollars out of your company?" What does Stolar say? "That's quite all right, buddy. Milk and two sugars?" Come to think of it, this rumble might turn out to be quite a laugh.

Lara Croft: social degenerate

And finally, the last word on videogames this month goes to Dr. Tom Shakespeare, as quoted in a recent edition of London's *Guardian*: "Videogames are a symptom, not the cause, of social degeneration. The triumph of Tomb Raider's Lara Croft and Mario the Plumber is part of the tendency towards the privatized, consumerist postmodern condition that is reflected in many other areas of life."

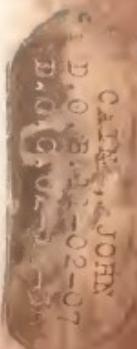


Visit **Next Generation Online** at <http://www.next-generation.com/> It's updated every day ...

ONE MAN. ONE SOLUTION. ONE STATE OF MIND.



ONE



NOVEMBER 1997

VISUAL CONCEPTS™



DNE™ and ASC Games™ are trademarks of American Softworks Corporation. DNE™ is co-developed by Visual Concepts. ©1997 American Softworks Corporation.
©1995 PEG Limited Partnership. PlayStation™ and the PlayStation logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment, Inc.
The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All rights reserved.

Arcadia

The latest arcade and coin-op news

Mortal Kombat 4 takes U.S. by storm

Manufacturers aren't supposed to pick favorites among new games, just as mothers aren't supposed to pick favorites among their children. Still, the folks at Midway Mfg. find themselves beaming just a bit more broadly when they talk about Mortal Kombat 4, the latest entry in this hit series. As every gamer in the world must know by now, the two-player video wargame features the debut of Midway's "zeus" chip, which generates 1.2 million polygons per second... a performance that makes it "ten times more powerful than Nintendo 64," according to Midway execs. The result: awesome 3D texture-mapped graphics and complex gameplay that achieve new heights of realism.

Players will also like the introduction of weapons into combat — axes, maces, you name it. One character can lose his weapon and the opponent can pick it up and use it against him, violence? Even a brief troyon yields blood, spine breaking, limb mangling, and so on. But that's been part of the appeal of the game ever since the first Mortal Kombat. You don't really expect creators Boon & Tobias to abandon a winning formula now, do you?

The game's preview tour of 25 cities around the country during July and August drew huge crowds of excited players, who waited in line for hours to play. The tour also generated more than a dozen, all positive stories on local TV newscasts, plus a frenzy of player interest on the internet (more than half a million "hits" a day to the MK4 web site).

When asked when MK4 is going to the home market, factory execs replied: "Right now, there aren't even any plans to take it to the home market. Our new Zeus chip is so far ahead of the

technology of home video that translating it eventually to any of the home platforms could prove something of a challenge."

Next up: Off-Road Challenge

Dazzling as it is, MK4 doesn't quite grab ALL the glory at Midway Mfg. these days. A new sit-down driving simulator called Off-Road Challenge is the first arcade game to come out of the old Cinematronics/Island Corp. office in San Diego since it was acquired a few years back by WMS/Midway. John Rowe and his California crew have been busy churning out home game hits ever since. Midway designers, led by Mike Hunley, sought to blend the heritage of two previous hits. Off-Road Challenge brings players the unique combination of fantasy and reality seen in Crusin' mixed with the theme and action of the original Off-Road. The game is housed in what Midway now calls "our standard driving cabinet" — previously seen in Crusin' World and San Francisco Rush.

Konami launches Solar Assault

August saw a new effort by Konami to challenge Sega and Nintendo in the deluxe simulator arena. Solar Assault puts you in the cockpit of an advanced star fighter. Your mission is to defend the planet Gradus against all manner of strange enemies. First-person POV 3D graphics give you a nonstop series of weird and wonderful targets to shoot at, and gameplay carefully gradates the speed and intensity of enemy action as you progress through five stages. The tension never lets up! Players use a joystick equipped with a trigger and missile button to interact with the 50-inch screen. Coming later from Konami will be

by Marcus Webb

Marcus Webb is the editor of *RePlay* magazine



Racon' Jam, the first U.S. release to use its million-polygons-per-second "Cobra" hardware platform, produced as a joint venture with IBM. Jasper's first "Cobra" arcade game is a number called Fighting Wu-Shu, but there's been some question of how (or if) to present it to the U.S. market.

CD-ROM games arrive in arcades

Whoop! While the arcade game manufacturers and arcade operators argue about whether CD-ROM-based games will work in arcades, a few such titles have quietly been slipped into the lineup unannounced. Capcom's *Three for as Pedestrians* call it, Street Fighter 3D was the first one we know of, and Konami's *Total Vice* was the second... but far from the last. Konami says it has more CD-ROM-based arcade games on the way. We also hear that Sega and Namco may be working on similar CD-ROM-based proprietary systems for arcade game use. As Arcadia readers know, arcade owners — allied with groups like the National Amusement Network, Intel, and Microsoft — have been calling for a universally "open" PC-based platform that can present CD-ROM-based games from numerous sources.

Iwerks, Showscan to merge

Is it a game or a ride? The line between the two formats sometimes blurs a bit at works Entertainment and Showscan Entertainment. Meanwhile, the line between the two companies themselves has disappeared completely. It was announced August 5 that they have signed a definitive agreement to merge. The merger will bring together the two largest motion simulation companies, making them the world's largest provider of ride simulation entertainment attractions and software. When the dust settles, Showscan will become a wholly owned subsidiary of Iwerks. As a result of the merger, the combined company will have more than 160 simulation theaters, which is the largest installed base of simulation theaters in the world, plus a library of more than 60 ride simulation titles, including the critically acclaimed Devil's Mine Ride and Cosmic Pinball from the Showscan 28-title library and *Ozma Island* and *Secrets of the Lost Temple* from Iwerks' 40-title library.



Konami's marketing pro Mery Hermanson at the helm and President "Smilin'" Mike Rudowicz at right

Retrowave

Anecdotes from computer and videogaming's past

The Owen Rubin Memorial Game Room

Owen Rubin holds a dubious record in the history of Atari Coin-op — the longest streak of unshipped games. Designers like Ed Logg (*Asteroids*, *Campeta*, *Guntlet*), Dave Theurer (*Missile Command*, *Tempest*), and John Saltwick (*Paperboy*, *Rampart*) used to refer to games that never shipped as being "in the Owen Rubin Memorial Game Room."

Rubin's greatest contribution to videogames, however, may have been a game called *Tunnel Hunt* — a game that might have been better off had it been relegated to the Memorial Game Room.

After seeing the docking scene in the movie *Alien* in 1979, Rubin got an idea for a game in which players flew a spaceship through tunnels. In those days, designers used vector graphics (a graphics generator that draws shapes with lines — *Battlezone*, *Asteroids*, and *Star Wars* were vector games) when they needed high-speed and

high-resolution images, so Rubin decided to do *Tunnel Hunt* with vector graphics.

The first time he made the game, he created square tunnels. It didn't look very good. Then David Sherman, another coin-op employee, suggested redoing the game with a new generator that could make an ellipse.

Gave said, "I've got this great hardware that does ellipses."

So we redid it in ellipses. We're about the end of 1980 by this time.

It looked really cool. You flew down these tunnels and they split; you know, there were forks, and you had to make decisions at the last minute or you would hit the walls. It was actually

by Steven Kent

A frequent contributor to *Next Generation*, Steven Kent is the author of a forthcoming book on the history of videogames



going to sell the game." I thought he meant they were going to manufacture it. They had decided they were going to sell the game intact to Eddy

— Owen Rubin

In 1982, Eddy Games, the company that made *Death Race 98* and *Crossbow*, offered to

Tunnel Hunt, a very good game at its conception, ended up a dog when it finally shipped

a fun game.

"And then they [the managers] said, 'Oh, the hardware is too expensive,' so they canned it."

— Owen Rubin

But *Tunnel Hunt* was not ready to die. Sherman suggested less expensive vector hardware that generated circles. It was late 1981 by the time Rubin finished rebuilding *Tunnel Hunt* with round tunnels. When Atari placed the game in a local arcade to judge player reaction, it consistently had the second highest coin drop in the arcade.

Management, however, decided that the circle generator was too expensive, so Rubin remade the game with square tunnels. In 1982, Atari tested *Tunnel Hunt* in a Seattle suburb. Though it still scored well with customers, Rubin's managers kept asking for minor changes. Ed Rotberg began calling *Tunnel Hunt* "the game that would not die."

I began working on *Tunnel Hunt* in late '82. By this time it was probably late '81 or early '82, and we were doing another version of it when they finally shelved it. They put it aside, so I started on *Major Havoc*.

— Owen Rubin

But by this time, *Tunnel Hunt* had a life of its own. Skip Paul, the head of Atari Coin-op, called Rubin into his office.

I got a call from Skip Paul, who said, "Well, we're

buying *Tunnel Hunt* and renaming it *Vortex*. Though the game still did well at a test site, Eddy eventually backed out, and a Florida-based company called Centuri (the company that imported *Time Pilot*) bought the game.

By the time it reached the arcades, however, *Tunnel Hunt* was five years old and looked hopelessly outdated. Centuri ended up with a bomb on its hands, and *Tunnel Hunt*, a very good game at its conception, ended up a dog when it finally shipped.

But Rubin (who, by the way, is still quite alive and a fellow at Apple) deserves to be remembered for more than Atari's longest losing streak. He created *Major Havoc*, one of the best vector games of all time. More than that, though, during all that time he spent creating games that didn't ship, he helped, maybe more than any single individual, to shape the zeitgeist of Atari Coin-op. For instance, Rubin constantly bugged Ed Rotberg (with whom he shared an office), about making the volcano in the background of *Battiszone* active. Finally, Rotberg got fed up and told Rubin that if he wanted the volcano to erupt, he could do the code. The next morning, Rotberg came in to find a new code listing on his chair and the volcano erupting onscreen.

Rubin was also active in the numerous practical jokes that characterized life at Atari Coin-op during its heyday.

Although few gamers remember his name, Owen Rubin was an integral member of the Atari team that produced some of the greatest arcade games of all time.



Atari's *Stun Runner* (top) bears an eerie resemblance to *Tunnel Hunt*. *Major Havoc* (above), one of Rubin's few completed games



"One of the most
impressive-looking
games of the year!"
PSX Sept. 97

Available Now!



Meet your new co-workers.

Welcome to Section 9 - a crack team of high-tech covert operatives. This is no ordinary desk job, rookie. Your new superiors aren't entirely human, and they expect you to learn fast. Don't forget the donuts...

- ✓ Plug into a wired world based on the hit feature film and comic book.
- ✓ Pilot a "Fuchikoma" tank through 12 huge 3-D search & destroy missions.
- ✓ Use its unique "go anywhere" capabilities to navigate floors, walls & ceilings.
- ✓ Brief yourself with over 10 minutes of original, theater-quality animation.

Visit your local retailer or call
1-818-225-8157 for orders only.

www.thq.com

© 1997 Matsushita Electric Industrial Co., Ltd. All rights reserved. The PlayStation logo is a registered trademark of Matsushita Electric Industrial Co., Ltd. The PlayStation name and logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The movie was a production of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

GHOSH IN THE SHELL®



Look for the *Ghost in the Shell* Special Edition movie, now available on DVD!



The Difference Is Real.

INTERACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

DEATH-DEFYING JUMPS

ADJUST ENGINE TRIM FOR SPEED

REALISTIC WATER PHYSICS CREATE WAKE EFFECTS

SO REAL ... YOU'LL WET YOURSELF.

VR SPORTS *POWERBOAT* *Racing*

16 BOATS TO CHOOSE FROM

Strap in and throttle up as you whip through the most realistic and immersive powerboat racing game ever made. Jump over roadways and through passing convoys or speed between oil tankers before they close off the track and turn your boat to splinters. Find a shortcut and take the lead, or better yet, secure your victory and force your opponent

into a river barge at 200 miles per hour.

- Dive under water, crash through waves and career off jumps.
- Fully interactive 3D environments that continuously change during races.
- Race computer opponents or compete with up to eight networked players.
- Eight super-intense racetracks from around the world to tear through.
- Can't find a worthy opponent? Race your "ghost" using your own best time.

Available January '98!

16815 Von Karman Avenue
Irvine, CA 92606
www.vrsports.com



Check out the tunnels but don't get too friendly with the walls.



See the sights in New York, but watch out for the cobst!



Split your screen 4 ways and play 3 friends simultaneously.



Use first-person or third-person "Hi-cam" to catch all the action!

25 breakthrough games

A guide to the **next**
level in **videogames**

This is not a holiday season buyers' guide. It is not even a story about the 25 best games on the market. In fact, many of these games will not be available before mid-1998. Instead, this is a look at the games that reach a little higher than most, and in a very real way, will impact the way we play games forever.

Over the next several months, the computer and videogame industry will ship hundreds of games across all formats. Many will be derivative, but a select few will move ahead the art of games. This story features 25 games that have already established themselves as titles to watch. They are the games that will create new standards in graphics and sound, new gameplay models, and possibly even new genres. Being predictably good or even great is one thing, but these are the games that show promise beyond the current industry standards.

Some of the games on the list will not be surprising — with new games from innovative developers like Dave Perry, Yuji Naka, and Shigeru Miyamoto, their inclusion was cheerfully inevitable. The list also features games from unexpected sources like DreamWorks and SegaSoft and will hopefully bring some well-deserved attention to the developers working on these outstanding titles.

The titles appear in alphabetical order and certainly (we hope) do not represent all the good games due out in the next few months; rather, these are simply the games that Next Generation has seen that even at an early stage of development, already possess exceptionally noteworthy characteristics. Doubtless, we expect, there are projects that should be on this list but aren't, either because they are still veiled in secrecy, or are coming from a totally unexpected source — a PC hooked to a Net Yaroze in an anonymous garage in the Midwest, perhaps.

Finally, it is important to note that this list is composed entirely of games that are still in development. This leaves open the possibility of delays, undelivered promises, and ideas that simply work better on paper than in games. There is no guarantee that all the games on the following pages will be good when they finally ship, but we are confident that they all will add significant new material to the body of game design art.

Battlezone

See NG 34

What's the game? Activision is no stranger to the ways of revamped classics, but *Battlezone* may well be its most exciting update yet. The original game's tank combat is updated with an impressive realtime strategy aspect, and one of the most innovative and intuitive interfaces in years.

What's the big deal? By using an innovative radar display, the team has managed to meld the first-person action of a fantasy sim like

Mechanix to the situational awareness of a realtime strategy game like *Command & Conquer*. Combining action with another genre has resulted in some killer titles (action + adventure = *Tomb Raider*; action + RPG = *Diablo*). When done right, that is. Remember *Ninjo Golf* or Hudson's tennis/role-playing game on Turbo Grafx? (We didn't think so.) Activision seems to be doing it right; the game also features an impressive resource and play-balancing scheme that ensures players will

Format:	PC
Publisher:	Activision
Developer:	Activision
Release Date:	Q1 1998

need to play the game as a true hybrid, not just as an action game with some strategy elements or vice versa.

Predicted effect: Two things. First, expect the action/realtime strategy game to become the next clone haven (with liberal borrowing of the game's radar concept). Second, this game will be very hard to duplicate on today's consoles; the balance of innovation is swinging back to the PC from the current generation of consoles.



Blade Runner

What's the game? Even after 15 years, *Blade Runner* still stands as one of the quintessential sci-fi movies. Considering the richness of the setting, it seems almost impossible that we've had to wait this long for a game. But Westwood's upcoming adventure game may just prove to be worth the wait.

What's the big deal? First, *Blade Runner* happens in real time in a 640x480 true color 3D world, and the game actually manages to do justice to the stunning visuals of the film.

What's more important, though, are the revolutionary "virtual actors." Unlike most adventure games, where characters interact with the player only at specific moments and in limited ways, *BR* supports a cast of characters that move about on their own, in real time, with or without the player's help (or knowledge). A realtime approach to adventures has been tried unsuccessfully in FMV bombs like *Psychic Detective*, but never to this extent; NPCs have their own AI agendas to pursue, and they can be altered by the player's actions. Designing the

Format:	PC
Publisher:	Virgin Interactive
Developer:	Westwood Studios
Release Date:	TBA

game in this way creates a situation where the game is different every time (especially considering that just who is or isn't a replicant, and those characters' subsequent behavior, can change each time you play)—a goal that many strive for but few have reached.

Predicted effect: After *Blade Runner*, few gamers will be satisfied with the standard, 2D, point-and-click-and-wait fare that has been the state of the art in adventures since the death of the text parser.



Burning Rangers

What's the game? From Yuji Naka, the man who brought us *Sonic and Nights*, comes a new and thoroughly innovative action/adventure game starring two young firefighters equipped with concussion bombs and jet packs. The idea is simple yet unique — enter burning buildings and rescue helpless victims while battling fires and powerful enemy characters strewn throughout the levels.

What's the big deal? *Burning Rangers*

exemplifies exactly the kind of innovative thinking that is missing in the majority of contemporary gameplay design. On a system that could easily have been allowed to fade away with a string of tried and tested (and tired) titles, the Sonic team is anxious to continue stretching the bounds of game design with an untested gameplay model featuring impressive technological feats, including a heavy reliance on sound in the form of vocal cues and carefully intertwined lighting effects that not only look

Format:	Sega
Publisher:	Sega
Developer:	Sonic Team
Release Date:	TBA

good but actually enhance game play.

Predicted effect: As Saturn nears the end of its life cycle, Sega fans will be reassured by the company's commitment to delivering quality games. And though no game, including *Burning Rangers*, could possibly save Saturn now, the game shows that 3D titles don't have to be *Mario* clones (ahem, *Rare*), and that Sega is still a serious force to be reckoned with on the software front.



Die by the Sword

See NG 33

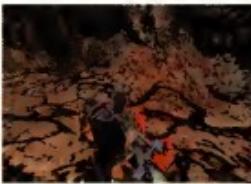
What's the game? *Die by the Sword* will inevitably be dubbed a Tomb Raider-style game, thanks to its fluid animation, third-person perspective, and adventure elements (which lean more to the fantasy RPG side than *Tomb Raider*), but where the game differs is in its advanced fighting control.

What's the big deal? Although *Die by the Sword* is just one in what is sure to be a long line of action/adventure games for PC, it makes this list because of its melee battle

mode. Thanks to an advanced physics model that does away with the need for traditional motion capture, and an innovative and intuitive control scheme (using the numeric key pad to aim sword strokes at various target areas on the enemies' bodies), players will have more control over their characters' fighting ability than ever seen before, even when compared to weapons sims like *Bushido Blade*. And the physics model ensures that heads, arms, and legs will all fly realistically off — snaring gore-seeking gamers with ease.

Format:	PC
Publisher:	Interplay
Developer:	Treyarch
Release Date:	December 1997

Predicted effect: Thanks to the success *Eldor* found with *Tomb Raider* last year, *Die by the Sword* will not be alone in the third-person adventure genre this holiday season. It should stand out of the pack because of its control and deep storyline. More importantly, however, the game's control scheme may effectively mark the beginning of the end for canned motion captured sequences in action games. They simply cannot provide the variety of motions needed for realtime, unscripted, sword-to-sword combat.



ng special

FireTeam

See NG 33

What's the game? The online-only *FireTeam* offers realtime, multiplayer, squad-level combat with real voice communications over a standard modem (a microphone is included in the package).

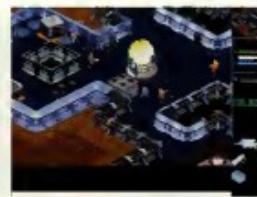
What's the big deal? Because individual *FireTeam* engagements are relatively short, it doesn't require the kind of hard-core commitment of, say, Ultimo Online, making it not only more instantly gratifying, but also more

accessible to the casual gamer. The voice communications system reinforces the notion of "multiplayer," and enables easier communication than trying to type a message while playing. Also, *FireTeam* allows for constantly new and different battlefields and mission objectives to keep the game from stagnating — everything from a Jurassic Park-like dinos vs. hunters game to a re-creation of the Peruvian hostage rescue scenario. The company is committed to supporting a true

Format:	Online
Publisher:	Multitude
Developer:	Multitude
Release Date:	Winter 1997

online community of devotees, as well.

Predicted effect: By forcing players to talk to each other to succeed, *FireTeam* may well be able to engender a community without creating an expensive, hard-to-modify, persistent world. Many companies are trying to follow Ultimo Online's lead, by taking a different approach — quick games with easily updated scenarios — *FireTeam* may demonstrate the model for getting non-RPGers to play.



Fly by Wire

See NG 34

What's the game? *Fly by Wire* may well be the first game specifically designed to take advantage of a controller. Basically, the game is a hyper-realistic sim of a radio-controlled helicopter — an item whose standard control pad bears a striking similarity to the action of the Sony Dual Analog Controller. Beyond just trying to keep the copter from crashing (a problem the game shares with real RC helicopters) there are various PilotWings-like piloting challenges to face.

What's the big deal? Not only is the game totally addictive (every time you play you get a bit better, making the desire to play "just one more time" almost irresistible), but the team that created it numbers a staggering two people. Dave Perry recently admitted that *Fly by Wire* was created to prove that new genres are still waiting to be discovered (and can be exploited by minuscule development teams), and this may well be the most important aspect of the game.

Format:	PlayStation, PC
Publisher:	Interplay
Developer:	Shiny
Release Date:	TBA

Predicted effect: It's difficult to predict what kind of effect a game like *Fly by Wire* could have, beyond saving a lot of people a lot of money on toy helicopter repairs (skills learned in the game transfer amazingly well to the real thing). Best case: it provides a wake-up call to the legions of developers who continue to work only on the tried and true. Worst case: We get a fun and addictive game (and maybe a pack-in for the Analog Controller). Either way, expect Dave Perry's reputation among gamers to continue to improve.



Galapagos

What's the game? Think of a 3D Lemmings with only one lemming, and you've got Golopogos. The player's job is to help Mendel, a four-legged insectoid, escape from the clutches of an evil corporation. The problem is, Mendel moves wherever he wants, and the only way to prevent his death is to manipulate the environment around him. This is done by raising bridges, moving blocks, and launching Mendel into the air from special platforms. In this way, Galapagos is more of a game than other recent Artificial Life experiments.



What's the big deal? While the default setting in the game begins Mendel's life at seven hours old for ease of use, it's far more amazing to watch him from birth. At this stage Mendel has to be taught everything, including how to walk. When he does learn to walk he repeatedly careers over the side of chasms or steps on lethal energy barriers until he learns that these things spell doom. All this is possible through technology known as NERM (Non-stationary Entropic Reduction Mapping), which makes for some interesting personality



Format:	Macintosh, PC
Publisher:	Electronic Arts
Developer:	Anark
Release Date:	November 1997

permutations. If Mendel gets harmed too often, his behavior will become increasingly unstable, to the point where he can no longer walk straight.

Predicted effect: Games like Golopogos ordinarily don't spawn imitations, just as the original Lemmings is pretty much the only game of its genre. However, its highly advanced Artificial Life program could be easily translated to any game; this sort of AI in a football game would be something to see.



G.Police

See NG 31

What's the game? Since the days of Pole Position, gamers have always wanted to get to the "city in the distance" and play amidst a real downtown landscape. Psygnosis is the first game to really deliver that experience in its jaw-dropping new 3D shooter. The player pilots a futuristic helicopter on a series of missions within a beautiful futuristic city landscape.

What's the big deal? There has been a great deal of attention given lately to the new 3D

acceleration cards, and though many of the games utilizing these cards have indeed looked great, none has managed to push the graphical limits as far as G.Police. As part of the overall impact of the game, G.Police features the signature Psygnosis presentation, complete with futuristic fonts, euro-techno tracks, and a generally hip artistic sense throughout. Although these elements have all been seen before in the Wipeout series and others, they still manage to seem no less fresh in G.Police. The game also includes a rich

Format:	PC, PlayStation
Publisher:	Psygnosis
Developer:	Psygnosis
Release Date:	Q4 1997

backstory told through an impressive series of FMV sequences seamlessly integrated into the mission objectives.

Predicted effect: Remember how it was Psygnosis that really showed what PlayStation could do, and how (eventually) other developers caught up? (By which time, of course, Psygnosis was way ahead again.) Expect the same thing to happen on PC while giving the company, in the process, its first original PC megahit.





THE MOST POPULAR RACING GAME. AVAILABLE IN A CONVENIENT TAKE-HOME SIZE.



You love playing San Francisco Rush in the arcades. Well, now you can race through the streets of the Bay Area in the comfort of your



own living room. In fact, you'll be able to choose from six different tracks (three more than in the arcade version). Each one showing



authentic San Francisco landscapes and so many places to catch air that you might be mistaken for an unidentified flying object. And if that's



not enough, you can take shortcuts through open fields and underground sewers. You can soar over building tops or be catapulted into the

San Francisco to visit
RUSH
EXTREME RACING



DESIGNED FOR
N64 RUMBLE PAK

air from a dismantled freeway overpass. It's San Francisco Rush. And lucky for you it's coming home in a more manageable size.

MIDWAY
midway.com
EA
PlayStation
K-A
ESRB

San Francisco Rush Extreme Racing™/©1997 Midway Games Corporation. All rights reserved. Midway is a registered trademark of Midway Games Inc. San Francisco Rush Extreme Racing is a trademark of Midway Games Corporation. Distributed by Midway Home Entertainment under license from Midway Games Inc. and the N64™ logo and trademarks of Nintendo of America Inc. ©1997 Nintendo of America Inc. PlayStation and the PlayStation logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

Grand Prix Legends

See MG 29

What's the game? Based on the 1967 Grand Prix circuit, a year considered one of the most exciting and dangerous years ever in Formula 1 history, *Grand Prix* is a retro sim with some high-tech development touches. As with all of Papyrus' racing games, realism is the norm for *Grand Prix* Legends.

What's the big deal? Beyond the intriguing concept of revisiting the days when tracks were thin, spectators stood close by, and cars carried

enough gasoline to guarantee a fiery explosion (and usually, a broken body) upon impact, *Grand Prix* Legends enjoys several benefits of an experienced development team. The most impressive aspect of the game is the hyper-realistic 3D physics model that allows for a new level of accuracy in the control and feel of the cars. The game also features 21 accurately modeled tracks from the 1967 circuit, including some that are no longer in existence because of their dangerous reputation, and real drivers

Format:	PC
Publisher:	Sierra
Developer:	Papyrus
Release Date:	December 1997

from the late '60s racing era as well.

Predicted effect: Racing sims typically attract a pretty narrow (although extremely loyal) audience, but with *Grand Prix Legend's* bold mission to recreate one of the more exciting eras in the history of the sport, many non-sim fans just may find themselves drawn to it. More generally, a new era of historical sports sims may be dawning (*Accolade's Legends*' *Football* is another example of the trend).



Half Life

See MG 29

What's the game? *Half Life* uses a heavily modified version of the Quake engine for a first-person game that's part action, part adventure game. Stuck in an abandoned-silo-turned-biological-research-station-run-amok, players will have to think as well as fight to survive.

What's the big deal? Valve may have licensed the Quake engine, but the team has modified it to the point where it's

almost unrecognizable. There are a number of new eye-candy features like realtime transparency, chrome surfaces, and colored lighting, but beyond this, Valve has invented a skeletal-based animation system and sophisticated enemy AI so the world not only looks, but acts as realistically as possible. Couple this with scripted events and a continuous storyline that really matters, and you've got a game with both style and substance.

Format:	PC
Publisher:	Sierra
Developer:	Valve
Release Date:	November 1997

Predicted effect: Although a number of developers are trying to push the first-person action game in the direction of less twitch and more actual thinking and emotional commitment, Valve seems to have come closest to nailing the right formula. As Valve co-founder Gabe Newell says, "It's an active world. It's not about a bunch of things standing around, waiting for you to come along and shoot them." If it hits, look for others to follow suit.





Kinda like reruns. Even more fun the second time around.



www.namco.com

Namco Mania™ Volume 3 © 1997 Namco Ltd. All Rights Reserved. PlayStation and its registered logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The PlayStation logo is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

I-War

See NG 34

What's the game? The first offering from the U.K.-based Particle Systems, *I-War* is setting its sights on the genre-defining *Wing Commander* series. Featuring breathtaking prerendered sequences that blend almost seamlessly with actual gameplay, the effect of *I-War* is more like a sci-fi movie than a traditional space shooter.

What's the big deal? One of only a precious few PC titles coming out in the near future to not go the route of the 3D accelerator, *I-War* manages

competitive visual bang in a software-only environment. Also important to note about the game is its depth of gameplay opportunities, which allows individuals to play the game as they please. Whether as a straight space shooter or a deeper strategy experience, *I-War* offers a luxury of freedom not found in most games. What's perhaps a more controversial aspect of the *I-War* story is that the game is being designed as a one-player-only game. In an age where multiplayer is king, Particle Systems has intentionally chosen to focus on

Format:	PC
Publisher:	Ocean
Developer:	Particle Systems
Release Date:	TBA

the single-player experience while holding off on any multiplayer options until development begins on a sequel.

Predicted effect: With most of the attention in the PC arena being given to 3D-accelerated, multiplayer games, *I-War* would seem dangerously close to falling into the "not interested" category. However, it may just be its refusal to go with the crowd that makes the game stand out. If there is a future for single-player, *Elite*-style games, *I-War* will reveal it.



Jedi Knight

See NG 34

What's the game? *Jedi Knight* is the sequel to the 1994 *Dark Forces*, a first-person shooter with as many flaws as highlights, but a general sense of potential throughout. And so LucasArts has set out to give *Jedi Knight* everything that the original lacked, including a better use of the Star Wars license, improved graphics, and more thoughtful level design.

What's the big deal? The biggest concern with any sequel is whether it can sufficiently

improve on the original, and *Jedi Knight* is in line to do just that — moving from bit-mapped sprite enemies to polygon models is only the beginning. What *Jedi Knight* does that no other first-person shooter has managed to do is to make good use of a nonprojectile weapon. Focusing more carefully on the powerful license at its disposal, the team has implemented a new gameplay dynamic through the use of the ultimate weapon in the Star Wars universe — the light saber. There is also a unique power-

Format:	PC
Publisher:	LucasArts
Developer:	LucasArts
Release Date:	Q1 1998

up system based on both the light and dark side of The Force (which, yes, works hand in hand with the light saber). *Jedi Knight* also incorporates a long list of multiplayer options, a feature sorely missing in the original.

Predicted effect: Competing against *Quake 2* and *Prey* will take more than just level design or a license; expect *Jedi Knight* to show how to do a first-person shooter without making it a derivative clone.



Mask of Eternity

See MG 3D

What's the game? The latest in Roberta Williams' King's Quest series dumps the static screens and point-and-click interface of traditional graphic adventures in favor of a true 3D environment and polygonal characters.

What's the big deal? While first- and third-person action game developers are struggling to add more thoughtful elements to their shoot-'em-ups, Williams and the

Sierra team are working from exactly the opposite direction — taking traditional graphic adventure values like character development, story, and puzzle solving and making them work in a physical, even gritty, fully interactive 3D world. If indeed *Mask of Eternity* can still truly be called a graphic adventure (and some might argue it isn't), it will be the first one in some years that doesn't require players to point, click, wait, and watch.

Predicted effect: Whether it succeeds or fails (and it's difficult to imagine Williams and company ever completely dropping the ball — even *Phantasmagoria* had its moments), the simple fact that such a high-profile series as King's Quest is in the process of reinventing itself so dramatically means the entire adventure game community is watching. Expect the genre to either change forever or stay as it is for a good while longer.



Everything you need to play fits into this handy compartment.

IT CAN TRANSPORT YOU TO MYSTICAL LANDS
FUEL YOUR COMPETITIVE DRIVE
AND STIMULATE THAT OFTEN NEGLECTED
MUSHY THING BETWEEN YOUR EARS



With Magic: The Gathering,
it's brains over brawn.



Imagine, a game that relies
on social interaction and brain
power. What a novel idea!



Messiah

See NG 33

What's the game? Dave Perry is quick to compare the core gameplay model of Messiah to that of John Newcomer's 1982 arcade classic *Joust*. Basically, the main character can fly, but not very well, and the game is played by trying to finesse this underdeveloped sense of flight. The gameplay goes far deeper than that of *Joust*, however, and features such innovative touches as bodily possession and the use of projectile weaponry, as the player controls a helpless cherub in a fight against the forces of Satan.



What's the big deal? Shiny's recent success with *MOK* effectively bought it a little freedom from the Earthworm Jim niche so many had locked it into. With *Messiah*, the codeshop is taking another giant leap towards redefining itself. More important at this point, however, is the highly advanced character engine employed in the game. Achieving revolutionary polygon counts and amazingly smooth animation for the game's characters and environments is the result of a newly designed engine that instead of limiting the number of polygons, starts with

an extremely high number and scales the performance back according to hardware limits.

Predicted effect: "Mr. Perry? It's Senator Lieberman for you." Beyond generating massive amounts of controversy (and publicity), if the game's character engine is half as good as it's claimed to be, it should set the industry on its collective ear. Perry claims to have "finally solved the polygon problem." If that's true, expect to see many imitations of his team's solution (patent or no patent) in coming years.



On the \$1,000,000 Magic Pro Tour, winners walk away with big bucks. And a trail of adoring fans in tow.



To flee the monotony
of everyday life, Magic
is a wise alternative
to the street lugs.



Each Magic card features artwork so vivid, you may actually feel its power. This is not always a good thing.

Aug. 16
THE POWER
STRUCTURE



Translated in nine languages, Magic can be played anywhere on earth. As for other locales, we're working on it.

ENTER
HERE



Looking for some sweet candy?
MAKE you need is a deck of Magic cards,
a worthy opponent and a functioning
cerebellum. Unleash your intellectual
Snack! Snack! Snack! Play Be free!

ng special

Metal Gear Solid

See NG 31

What's the game? Konami's third-person adventure, and all-around good looks in one of the most ambitious PlayStation titles yet. A sequel to an early NES game, *Metal Gear Solid* is set in an Alaskan nuclear facility and features a combination of stunning prerendered and real-time 3D environments.

What's the big deal? In an age where the rule on consoles is "make more things blow up,"

Metal Gear Solid replaces mindless action with sophistication and stealth. This is not to say that there are no explosions (there are some fabulous explosions and action sequences), but rather that the game is based on carefully maneuvering a character into a heavily guarded facility using intelligence and a long list of clever and, comparatively speaking, complex devices. *Metal Gear Solid* also boasts a great attention to detail. From the intricately designed environments to small graphic touches like

Format:	PlayStation
Publisher:	Konami
Developer:	Konami
Release Date:	TBA

smoking guns and footprints in the snow, the game is a convincing sell on every level.

Predicted effect: *Metal Gear Solid* will draw comparisons to *Resident Evil*, and will likely do the same thing for Konami that the gothic thriller did for Capcom in both sales and reputation. Expect PlayStation software to start to move, in part, away from mindless violence towards games like *ooy* that require finesse as well as quick reflexes.



Myth

See NG 27

What's the game? *Myth* offers realtime strategy engagements between armies of mythical creatures. Gameplay is both simple, since there's no resource management or building up of forces, and deep, since combat occurs on a fully 3D, contoured, realistic landscape.

What's the big deal? The simple fact that it's in 3D would instantly set *Myth* apart from the flood of top-down, sprite-based Command &

Conquer clones saturating the market. However, the designers' commitment to realistic physics and terrain-dependent battle tactics (granting the fantastic nature of the troops involved, naturally), puts *Myth* in a strategy game class practically by itself. Add in a macabre sense of both style and humor, close attention to tiny details, inventive multiplayer options, and a lot of gore, and it's clear this is a game that deserves all the attention it gets and more.

Format:	Macintosh, PC
Publisher:	Bungie
Developer:	Bungie
Release Date:	Winter 1997

Predicted effect: Hopefully, *Myth* represents a fresh new direction for the already stale and creatively dead realtime strategy genre. Yet it's just similar enough to keep from alienating genre fans, getting them to try it, and letting them discover there's more to winning a battle than just mining gold/liberium/whatever and sending in waves of attackers. The fact that it should ship simultaneously on the Mac also should show that the OS is still a viable platform for at least a small number of titles.



Prey

See MG 33

What's the game? From the creators of Duke Nukem 3D comes a new first-person 3D shooter called Prey, with a slightly different approach to spatial relations. Dubbed Portal technology, Prey features a series of rooms linked together by portals, as opposed to traditional architectural designs based on walls and halls.

What's the big deal? By featuring Portal technology and committing to being for 3D



accelerators only, Prey gets a technological leg up on the competition in terms of rendering efficiency. What's more important, however, are the unique opportunities that come through the use of an untraditional spatial model. By using portals instead of traditional environment layouts, the team can create a much less predictable gameplay dynamic, including such fanciful notions as portals that lead back into the same room (look out the portal into the next room and see your back



Format	PC
Publisher	GT Interactive
Developer	3D Realms
Release Date	June 1998

looking out the door), and more. Nauseating to some, perhaps, but certainly a step beyond the traditional, expected worlds of Quake.

Predicted effect: Gamers are now very familiar with the complex 3D worlds of Quake-class titles; they are ready for the more abstract environments promised by the Prey technology — what would have been too confusing a year ago can now be accepted. Expect to see space get more warped in the 3D games to come.



Quake 2

See MG 34

What's the game? The original Quake multiplayer action game of all time, but not much as a one-player experience. Quake 2, on the other hand, while maintaining and enhancing all that made the multiplayer version great, will make huge strides in improving play for the solitary user.

What's the big deal? The big improvements for Quake 2 come in the form of graphical

enhancements and include such things as increased polygon counts for enemy characters from 150 to 600, realtime dynamic light sourcing, shadows and transparencies, and a more varied color palette. With 3D acceleration being the norm this time around, these and other visual effects are not expected to be problematic in the slightest. The game will also feature a less tangible but much appreciated focus on the one-player experience.

Format	PC
Publisher	Activision
Developer	Id
Release Date	November 1997

Predicted effect: Want to know what the bulk of 3D shooters will look like in the months to come? Look no further than this. Beyond just a better Quake, so many games will be using the engine that is quickly coming to define the state of the art that it is clearly one of the most important PC releases of the year — companies' fortunes will be made and lost on how well Carmack's latest engine competes with the inevitable rivals to the 3D shooter throne.



ng special

Skies

See NG 32

What's the game? From military sim experts Paradigm, a company that cut its teeth in the game industry with the visually stunning PilotWings 64, comes yet another flight-based visual extravaganza. The game features RPG elements in an online, persistent world, action/adventure atmosphere.

What's the big deal? Skies features one of the largest and most beautifully realized 3D environments ever seen in a computer game,

making it doubly exciting that the world is persistent and home to multiple players via SegaSoft's Heat network. The gameplay takes place both indoors and out in a world of floating cities à la Land of Calrissian and Cloud City. The game also features an impressive way of illustrating a character's experience level with an actual aging process that can be seen in the character's appearance. Finally, the game makes good use of SegaSoft's Transactor technology, making it possible to

Format	Online
Publisher	SegaSoft
Developer	Paradigm
Release Date	TBA

buy/sell/trade items, weapons, and even characters with other players over the Net.

Predicted effect: Think every persistent world needs to be set in the Middle Ages? Think again. On setting and character design alone, Skies deserves to be on this list; there simply has not ever been a game before that features anything like these characters doing these things. Although there will probably be some in the future ...



StarCraft

See NG 33

What's the game? After helping to usher in the age of the real-time strategy game with Warcraft 2, Blizzard set to work on what will likely represent the next level in the genre. StarCraft picks up where other real-time strategy games leave off, with deeper mission objectives (even in multiplayer), more sophisticated play balancing, and a graphic edge over the competition.

What's the big deal? With the experience of designing one of the greatest real-time

strategy games already behind them, the developers at Blizzard have been able to focus on the finer points of the genre and the new possibilities therein. Unlike the legions of clones ("Yeah, it's like Warcraft, only this unit is an Urk, and it is a little different from an Orc"), Blizzard actually innovates when it develops a new product — the game features a new approach to rendering characters and an isometric view to enhance the visual depth of the playing field. Finally, the game was specifically designed to work with Blizzard's

Format	PC
Publisher	Blizzard
Developer	Blizzard
Release Date	December 1997

own Battle.net, a free multiplayer online service. (And this time, there will be no cheating!)

Predicted effect: Although we're tempted to say, "Watch the clones try to play catch-up," even the most dense developers must surely sense that this is an overcrowded genre. So look for Blizzard and Westwood to weather the current storm of clones and continue to dominate — and innovate — in the genre they helped create.



10 Six

See page 110

What's the game? *10 Six* combines the first-person perspective of the action/shooter genre with real-time strategy gameplay in a multiplayer battle for land and resources. The game will run exclusively on SegaSoft's Heat network and will support up to one million players (so to the 6th power).

What's the big deal? Beyond the fact that the game supports up to one million players in a persistent universe, *10 Six* features SegaSoft's

exclusive Transactor technology, wherein objects in the game are specifically encoded so that they may be traded, bought, sold, or stolen. Protected by high-level encryption techniques, the Transactor items include everything from power-ups to new attack vehicles. Also, the persistent nature of the universe and the consequent need to protect personal holdings will force players to band together like never before in a multiplayer environment.

Format	Online
Publisher	SegaSoft
Developer	PostLinear
Release Date	Q1 1998

Predicted effect: The persistent universe in *10 Six* is an exciting proposition, to say the least. What will happen when one million players start implementing different strategies and gameplay schedules is really anyone's guess, and the possibility of intriguing gameplay innovations coming from this experimental approach is absolute. This combined with future applications for the Transactor technology may forever change the way multiplayer games are played.



Trespasser

See page 58

What's the game? Featuring a powerful new 3D engine that does not rely on 3D accelerator cards, this first-person adventure strands the player (in the role of Anne) on the dino-infested Island several years after the *Lost World* film. Like Gilligan, your job is to survive long enough to get off the island.

What's the big deal? Physics genius and DreamWorks Producer Seamus Blackley has

recruited team members from beyond the normal industry gene pool to help him build a breakthrough game engine. The team includes a coder who wrote the software for the F/A-18 fighter and an artist who designed Tomorrowland at Tokyo Disneyland. The game features superb physics, including an amazing true water physics model. By far DreamWorks' biggest project to date, the game boasts music produced by John Williams exclusively for the game, voice-

Format	PC
Publisher	DreamWorks Interactive
Developer	DreamWorks Interactive
Release Date	Q1 1998

overs by Richard Attenborough, and an as-yet-to-be-named famous actress to voice the role of Anne.

Predicted effect: Like *Messiah*, *Trespasser* will break new ground in software technology and will undoubtedly advance the state of first-person gameplay beyond the limited spectrum of "shooter." This and *Blade Runner* should prove that a licensed title can actually be done well.



ng special

Ultima Online

See NG 34

What's the game? Ultima Online is the online version of the immensely popular Ultima series. While the game doesn't fit neatly into any one genre, it can best be described as a graphical MUD/internet-based RPG.

What's the big deal? Origin's servers are designed to handle thousands of players at a time (more than 100,000 of whom are already playing the beta version), as well as the

behavior of thousands of NPCs, monsters, and ecosystems. In keeping with the series' tradition, the game's balance is carefully maintained and enhanced in its online form; for example, if players kill too many sheep, the local dragon will lose its food source and attack the nearby city. A dynamic environment such as this ensures something new and fresh to do every time the game is played.

Predicted effect: If there is only one successful

Format:	Online
Publisher:	Electronic Arts
Developer:	Origin
Release Date:	TBA

commercial persistent game world, it will be this one. Origin has the experience, the talent, and the heritage to pull it off. Also, by sticking with 2D, UO avoids having to solve the inevitable problems that will crop up in 3D development. Given the trouble of altering persistent worlds, it may be hard for competitors to play catch-up if Ultima Online takes off; this may leave room for new players to emerge sometime in the future if current non-Ultima offerings fail to satisfy.



Zelda 64

See NG 34

What's the game? After Mario, the 64-bit update of *Zelda 64* has easily been the most highly anticipated among Nintendo fans, and the game looks to be on track for giving loyal fans exactly what they've been hoping for. Staying true to the gameplay model established in earlier *Zelda* adventures, Shigeru Miyamoto combines adventure elements with a light RPG touch.

What's the big deal? The most obvious advancement for *Zelda 64* is the move from

2D to realistic 3D characters and environments. And though this advancement has been played out with several other series over the past couple of years, few have benefited the way *Zelda* has. Beyond the fact that the exploration aspects of the game have taken on a whole new life in 3D, the game has also been allowed a chance to develop a new sense of sophistication and maturity. Although the game is still cartoonish, there has been a coming-of-age process achieved through the use of facial

Format:	Nintendo 64
Publisher:	Nintendo
Developer:	Nintendo
Release Date:	April 1998 (U.S.)

expressions (a feature impossible in earlier versions) and older, more complex-looking characters. It isn't *Final Fantasy VII*, but it isn't Kirby-level either.

Predicted effect: While it will surely be a new high watermark for N64, once Nintendo shows how it's done, expect all companies not working on a *Final Fantasy VII* clone (and some that are) to release, on CD or cart, their version of Miyamoto's 3D action/RPG. Who knows? Some may be good.



Zork Grand Inquisitor

See NG 32

What's the game? After the disappointing *Zork Nemesis*, series loyalists may soon have reason to rejoice again. *Zork Grand Inquisitor* is a planned return to the things that made the *Zork* series what it is, including the ability to try to do anything in the game, thanks to the addition of the Dungeon Master as a narrator/character, who gives replies to any attempted action.

What's the big deal? Perhaps one of the most

exciting aspects of the *Zork Grand Inquisitor* game package is the inclusion of a new *Zork* text adventure from Marc Blank, one of the co-creators of the series. The game, titled *Undiscovered Underground*, takes place just before the time of *Grand Inquisitor* and leads into its graphic partner well. As for *Grand Inquisitor*, it utilizes the *Nemesis* engine but features several enhancements. Contrary to the way most modern adventures are created, *Grand Inquisitor* was written in full as a text

Format:	PC
Publisher:	Activision
Developer:	Activision
Release Date:	TBA

adventure before any of the graphic work was begun. The end effect of this approach is a graphic adventure that plays more like its deeper, text-based cousin.

Predicted effect: The text adventure — or more importantly the depth and puzzle quality made possible by the text adventure — is coming back. *Myst* and *7th Guest* aside, the more a graphic adventure is like a text adventure in terms of depth and plot, the better it will do.



Conspicuously missing

Tomb Raider 2

While Core's follow-up to last year's staggeringly good *Tomb Raider* is on track to surpass the original, the game is ultimately just a sequel and therefore will probably not make the same kind of influential impact this time around. More of the same may be a good thing with *Tomb Raider*, but it isn't innovative and thus, hard to consider a breakthrough.

Resident Evil 2

Falling into a similar category as *Tomb Raider 2*, Capcom's sequel will no doubt shock and delight a whole new generation of PlayStation and PC gamers. However, beyond a slightly more sophisticated development touch, there seems to be very little to suggest any real innovations over the original.

Unreal

Though GT Interactive's first-person shooter is easily one of the most visually stunning games ever made, there just doesn't seem to be enough by way of gameplay innovation to make the cut — especially in a genre already in serious danger of overpopulation.

Daikatana

Simply put, the jury is still out on John Romero's new first-person shooter. Certainly the game concept boasts some creative ideas, but a precious few of them have actually been seen running in the game. This could well be one of those titles that should have made the cut, but it's just too early to say for sure. Hopefully, we'll all be pleasantly surprised.

Riven

Myst is still the best-selling PC game some

The following games are the titles that could have made the list except for ...

months. But while we applaud the Miller brothers' previous "explorainment" CDs, *Cosmic Osmo* and *The Monhole*, *Myst*, with its illogical puzzles and lack of inventory, did more to set back the adventure game than anything since Activision closed down Infocom (Activision has improved a lot since then, see above). *Riven* may be beautiful, it may out-Myst *Myst*, but unless there's some kind of actual game in there (and nothing we've seen so far implies that there will be), we won't be holding our breath.

Note to developers: By all that's holy, please, please, no *Riven* clones, OK?

IT'S A.L.I.V.E.

AUTONOMOUS LIVING INTERACTIVE VIRTUAL ENTITY

finfin

THE REAL COMPUTER CREATURETM

"the title's 'artificial intelligence' backbone makes this product truly shine... a fascinating release."

-Billboard Magazine-

*"finally,
a Pet that
won't make
a Mess!"*



finfin exists in real time, with 365 unique days of the year, changing seasons and weather.



"Windowed" mode allows you to see and interact with finfin while using other programs.

The
ONLY
Virtual Pet
That
Responds
To YOUR
VOICE!

PC CD-ROM
WINDOWS® 95
www.finfin.com
1 888-99-A-LIFE

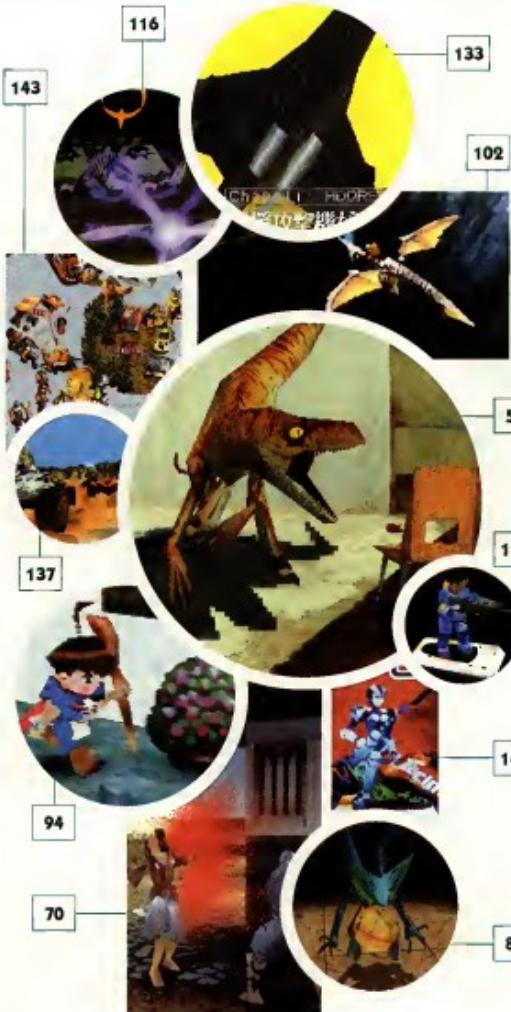
MICROPHONE
INCLUDED

FUJITSU

Fujitsu Interactive, Inc. 128 Spear Street, San Francisco, CA 94105 Copyright 1997 Fujitsu Limited. All rights reserved. Fujitsu and the Fujitsu logo are registered trademarks of Fujitsu Limited. finfin is a trademark of Fujitsu Interactive, Inc. Microsoft and Microsoft Windows® are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. All other trademarks herein are the property of their respective owners. Quote from Billboard Magazine and other quotes used with permission.

alpha s

Non-schtick previews



Despite DreamWorks' less than auspicious start, *Trespasser*, an original game based on the *Lost World* universe, might change your opinion of the company. Also, *Panzer Dragoon Saga* proves that a system's best games are often released towards its twilight.

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| 58 | Trespasser | PC |
| DreamWorks dinosaurs with gameplay | | |
| 70 | Sony Music | PlayStation |
| New games from the Peppappa camp | | |
| 70 | Atari Games | Arcade |
| Inside Silicon Valley's house of coin-op | | |
| 81 | Dan Van Elderen | |
| Atari's president talks of all things arcade | | |
| 86 | Metropolis | PC |
| Polish game developers? No joking, man! | | |
| 94 | Quest 64 | Nintendo 64 |
| The premier N64 RPG may be from THQ | | |
| 102 | Panzer Dragoon Saga | Sega |
| An RPG set within the <i>Panzer</i> universe | | |
| 110 | 10Six | Online |
| A M.U.L.E.-inspired, million-player title | | |
| 116 | Shadow Master | PlayStation |
| Not a ninnie game, but one stick shooter | | |
| 123 | Joint Strike Fighter | PC |
| Innerloop enters the dogfighting fray | | |
| 123 | Respect Inc. | PC, PlayStation |
| A comical approach to "tarn mafia" | | |
| 133 | Front Mission Alternative | PlayStation |
| Square goes mecha-ing again | | |
| 137 | Powerslide | Multiple |
| Emergent takes the 3Dx chip off-road | | |
| 143 | Seven Kingdoms | PC |
| I-Magic spins its own brand of <i>Merchants</i> | | |
| 147 | Motor Raid | Arcade |
| Model 3 technology meets combat racing | | |
| 150 | Outwars | PC |
| Third-person action with some surprises | | |
| 150 | Einhander | PlayStation |
| Square deftly dabbles in shooter territory | | |

See the Next Generation Disc for more information when you see this symbol

Trespasser

Hoping to eradicate the negativity associated with the ultimate "Hollywood" game developer, DreamWorks has assembled a "dream team" of artists and programmers for its premier first-person adventure



With incredible bump-mapped skins, the dinosaurs in *Trespasser* are unlike any polygonal creatures seen in a game to date



***Trespasser* features some of the best talent a big budget can buy**

much more than a steady kicking by press and gamers alike for titles like *The Neverhood* and *Lost World*. So when the company cautiously opened its bruised doors to *Next Generation* to unveil its largest and most ambitious endeavor yet — *Trespasser* — we were prepared to be underwhelmed. What we saw, though, should make Lucas nervous.

Format:	PC
Publisher:	DreamWorks
Developer:	DreamWorks
Release Date:	Q1 1998
Origin:	U.S.

Set several years after *The Lost World*, this "interactive sequel" puts players in the role of Anne, a shipwreck survivor stranded on the dinosaur-infested island from the film. From a first-person perspective, in real time, players guide Anne through the island's many hazards, using the wreckage of the movie's Site B to secure her rescue.



The game environment blends the wilderness with Site B wreckage

The game is such a priority at DreamWorks that Producer Searus Blackley gets the occasional call from Spielberg himself.

Blackley, producer of System Shock and Flight Unlimited at Looking Glass, sums up the project like this: "At Looking Glass, we were always striving for good gameplay. So I figured the thing to do here was to take an engine that had really good gameplay and then [use the budget] to add things onto it, like the music, and really take it to another level."

And take it to another level he has. Trespasser features some of the best talent a big budget can buy. The music includes tracks scored by John Williams exclusively for the game. Richard Attenborough voices the memoirs of InGen founder John Hammond, which are revealed by Anne (set to be played by a "name" actress, to be announced later) as she explores the island.

A lazy producer might ride on these trappings, but Blackley is still more committed to the gameplay experience than to the flesh. "People enjoyed [System Shock]," he says, "because they

understood the physical modeling. Their success in the game was based on their ability to use their intuition to get through the game — to use their intuition from the real world to solve the problems in the game, and not to be second-guessing the designers." Still, he admits improvements in gameplay from the Looking Glass days are needed. Why? Because with those games, "we fucked up really bad and made [the games] way too complicated."

Blackley is considered by some in the industry to be the ultimate game developer, and it is easy to see why. He holds a Ph.D. in theoretical high energy physics, and his uncanny mathsspeak is at the same time blended with colorful vocabulary, belying a deviant schoolboy mentality. Blackley is certainly a grown-up, but one who hasn't shaken that youthful, destructive nature.





With strong AI, the dinosaurs behave as if in the wild. Players may often venture across different species in conflict.

that is inherent in so many gamers — you get the sense he still comes up with new and highly inventive ways to blow up the toilets in public rest rooms. If he can transfer that energy to the all-star team he's assembled, he may very well produce DreamWorks' first hit game.

Given Blackley's academic background, the engine's high-end physics model isn't surprising. The engine is based on immersion properties, and everything within the game is persistent. Game objects are built and held together with a "magnet" system. When an object breaks, it stays broken. The player can pick up and use broken pieces of an object, and corpses don't magically disappear. Even the innovative inventory

system uses the physics magnets, "so you can shove stuff into your belt," Blackley says excitedly. "You can carry a couple of things — and that's your inventory system. If you want to look at what you're holding, you look down and see what you've got shoved into your belt. There's no breaking of context." His goal is to provide gameplay liberties unlike those seen in any game before. "If you want to pick up the chair leg and use it as a weapon," Blackley charms, "that's cool. If you want to pick up a shotgun and beat something with it instead of shooting with it, you're welcome to do that."

The game features one of the most impressive terrain engines we've seen; by rendering tens to thousands of trees in real time. Still, Blackley assures that "we're not building Microsoft Hiking Simulator." Even the water in *Trespasser* boasts strong Physics. Akin to the water in the N64 version of *Wave Race*, it is physically modeled and physically rendered. "So if you throw something into the water," says Programmer Scott Peter, "it creates waves, and the waves propagate according to actual, correct physics. It is rendered through a correct optical model, with a per-pixel reflection equation that utilizes our bump-mapping primitive images."

The game is also set to solve some of



While small firearms are available to the player, ammo is in short supply. A pistol may kill a raptor, but it certainly won't kill a T-Rex.



Several sketches depict Anne. At press time, the designers hadn't decided if the player will ever see her face during gameplay.

the problems plaguing 3D graphics, starting with the proper shadowing so that the placement of objects and distances look natural. "This is so you don't get into the Lara Croft problem of having no lighting and not knowing where to jump," Blackley expounds. The team also has to draw on the broader *Lost World* license, and things have to look good enough to impress Spielberg: "You realize that the dinosaurs are the star of the show," Blackley says. "You have to be able to put a skin on them that looks amazing."

And what a skin the team has put on the dinosaurs. Within the software, the

programming team has implemented a revolutionary bump-mapped skin, which adds depth to the textures and produces a startlingly realistic look. This is complemented by Phong shading, which enables artists to light every pixel on the dinosaur's skin, as opposed to Gouraud shading, which only lets programmers light the corners of polygons.

"They can't look like polygonal creatures," Blackley says of the dinosaurs. "They can't even look like Quake 2 creatures." To this end, Blackley hired fine artists from outside the game world, including Art Director Terry Izumi, a designer at Disney for several years who designed some of Tokyo Disney's Tomorrowland, and George Edwards, a veteran Disney animator who animated the character *Sleeping Beauty* for the film of the same name.

To process the high level of physics and artwork in *Trespasser*, the team is not compromising on specs — it will require a P120, at the minimum. In its attempt to set a new high bar for rendering on-the-fly, DreamWorks recruited some heavy hitters from in and outside the game industry, including the man responsible for coding the software for Lockheed's F-22 fighter, Greg Stull. And Mark Langerak, who created *Trespasser*'s terrain modeler and cutting-edge compression, was the head

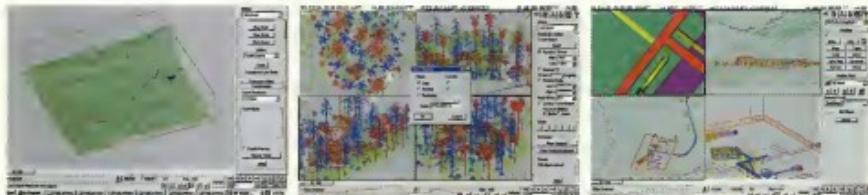


The dinosaur models are industry standard at 300 polygons, but it's the bump-mapping and Phong shading that really make them shine



The different dinosaurs (between five and 10) will vary from peaceful herbivores to savage carnivore types





The artists create both interior and exterior environments in 3D Studio MAX, then import them directly into the game

of development at Sega Europe.

But why worry about software rendering when universal acceptance of 3D accelerators is imminent? "More hardware accelerators are shipping or more and more PCs," Blackley points, "and more and more games are looking exactly the same as everything else." The producer denounces the "super filtered" look of these games, which he says makes them appear "all blurry and weird."

Of course, Blackley quickly adds that those who've invested in 3D cards will get an added visual boost. "We're basically going to use it as a pixel pump and to move data. It's going to enable us to do even more math."

And as Shiry's David Perry suggested in **NG 33**, smart math is also Blackley's key to producing landmark performances from limited hardware. But it hasn't all been algebra problems. To get his project rolling properly, Blackley acknowledges that he's had to cut through his fair share of idealistic Hollywood sandbaggers at

DreamWorks. "I was opposed to starting [the way] Rocket Science did," he says with the air of a protagonist. "Trying to get Hollywood talent to design games is bizarre and obviously never going to work." Now that the company has decided to do things his way he's got plenty of weight riding on his shoulders.

"The thing I'm sweating about is making sure the game is fun," Blackley exhumes, exhausted from a day of running **Next Generation** from room to room to see pieces of a demo that shattered when a server crashed the night before. "When I'm sitting around writing equations for dinosaurs," he says, "I'm always thinking about how cool it is to pick shit up and hit a dinosaur with it; what it feels like to hit a dinosaur."

As long as DreamWorks allows Blackley and his team of 30 to maintain this vision, it may have a chance at something that, as yet, no one at the company has delivered — a truly impressive game.



DreamWorks is capable of getting several complex polygonal characters on screen at the same time. And as in the film, the velociraptors travel in small groups



ONCE YOU DIVE INTO ITS DEPTHS,
YOU MAY NEVER RESURFACE.

PC CD-ROM

SUB CULTURE



INCREDIBLE 3D GRAPHICS
DYNAMIC LIGHTING EFFECTS

IMMERSIVE SOUND EFFECTS
MISSION-BASED OBJECTIVES

REAL-WORLD PHYSICS
NON-LINEAR GAMEPLAY



www.ubisoft.com



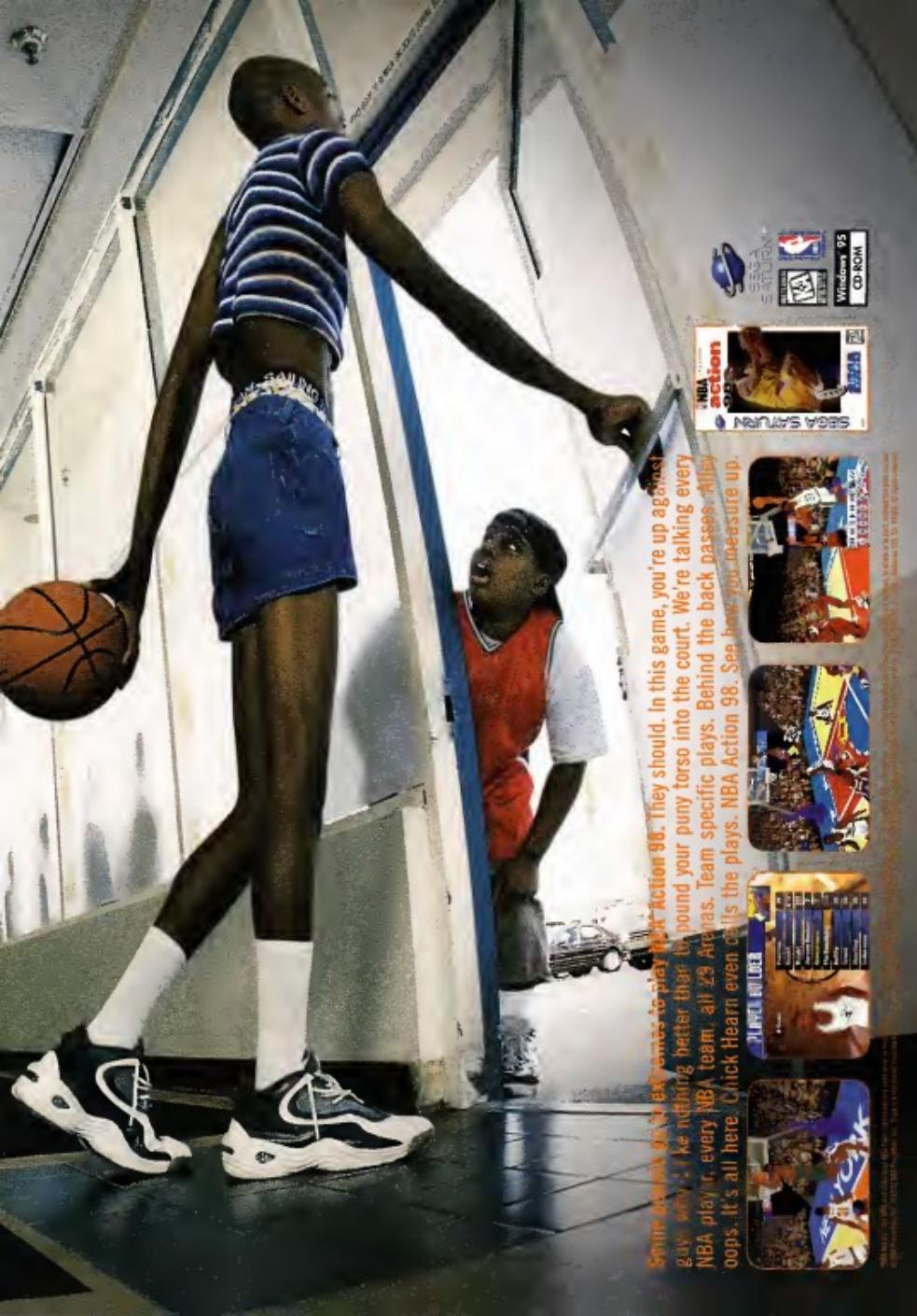
© 2007 Ubisoft Entertainment. All rights reserved. Star Wars™ and Lucas™ are trademarks of Lucasfilm Ltd. and its affiliated companies. All other trademarks belong to their respective companies.



nba® action 98



SEGA® hard stuff
www.Sega.com



Smith Brothers. No excuses to play **NBA Action 98**. They should. In this game, you're up against guys who like nothing better than to pound your puny torso into the court. We're talking every NBA player, every NBA team, all 29 Arenas. Team specific plays. Behind the back passes. Alley oops. It's all here. Chick Hearn even calls the plays. **NBA Action 98**. See how you measure up.



© 1998 SEGA. All rights reserved. SEGA, the SEGA logo, NBA Action, and the NBA logo are registered trademarks or trademarks of the NBA and its respective entities. All other marks and names are properties of their respective owners. SEGA is a registered trademark of SEGA Corporation. SEGA and the SEGA logo are registered trademarks of SEGA Corporation. © 1998 SEGA. All rights reserved. SEGA, the SEGA logo, NBA Action, and the NBA logo are registered trademarks or trademarks of the NBA and its respective entities. All other marks and names are properties of their respective owners. SEGA is a registered trademark of SEGA Corporation. SEGA and the SEGA logo are registered trademarks of SEGA Corporation.



nhl® all-star hockey '98





SEGA® hard stuff
www.sega.com

The stuffies don't get through. Not on NHL® All-Star Knives. If you're on this ice you'd better know how to make a lightning fast glove save. Head. Fists. Pucks. And entire bodies. Strapping cross checks. It's all 650 NHL players, all 26 NHL teams, all the trades. If it were any more realistic you'd be chipping your teeth on the boards. You can even custom design the most impervious stuffie. Just remember to cover your 5-hole.





last bronx





SEGA® hard stuff
www.sega.com

You've heard about an ice cream headache. Well, is your real-life head of a nail stuck headache. One's coming your way in Last Bronx™, the wicked new action arts fighting game based on the 1985 arcade hit Ghosetti from one of eight warriors, each with their own arsenal of mortal arts, graphics, and sound effects. It's fast, it's fun, it's everything you want in a game.



Sony Music Entertainment

One of Sony's more creative teams is hard at work on a plethora of new titles



Speed Power Gatchaman
features shape-changing
robots and a fully 3D
environment. Flesty
special effects
underscore the game's
heavily online-influenced
design.



Sony Music Entertainment cut its development teeth with the pretty (if not exactly exciting) Kileak series during PlayStation's salad days. Earlier this year, however, it was also responsible for the astonishingly gorgeous graphic adventure, Kowloon's Gate, and a little thing called *Parappa the Rapper*.

With this success under its collective belt, Sony Music Entertainment now has five titles in the works that show off a nice breadth

of gameplay and subject matter, as well as the graphic splendor the division has become known for. Tenchu, an action game with some adventure elements, seems to be a deliberate cross between Square's Bushido Blade and Konami's Metal Gear Solid. Set in feudal Japan, the game allows players to choose between two characters, either a male or female ninja. The object is to infiltrate a sprawling castle, which is constructed as a fully 3D, texture-

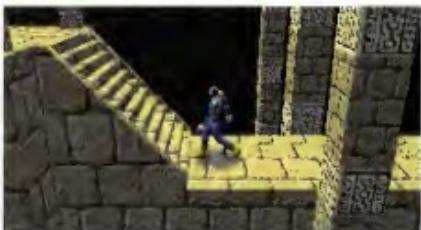


Judging by the gratuitous arterial spray above, the team at SME probably saw a few *Baby Cart* movies and played *Bushido Blade*

mapped environment that players can explore at will. The influence of *Bushido Blade* is clear, as players can run anywhere, even over balconies and roofs. As in *Metal Gear Solid*, however, players will have to rely on stealth to avoid detection — even a shadow can give the player away — waiting until the right moment to spring to attack.

Another 3D action game from SME, in a slightly different vein, is *Escaper*, based on an original superhero-style universe. It's clear some thought and creativity have gone into the character designs, although the backgrounds are not as detailed as

the ones in *Tenchu*. Again, players will be offered a choice between two characters, Escaper and Danger, but will also have the opportunity to create and modify their own characters. The emphasis seems to be more on straightforward action, but there are some puzzle elements scattered throughout. How this will mesh with the game's continuous countdown clock, which requires the player to keep moving, remains to be seen.



Escaper is a 3D action game with superhero characters. These early backgrounds are relatively simple, but serviceable

ng alphas



Still in 3D, but a very different sort of game altogether is Speed Power Gunbike, another of the giant mech games Japanese players can't seem to get enough of. In the year 2097, the Anadone, a resistance movement battling an evil warlord, has developed a new kind of weapon: a transforming battle robot called the Gunbike. The player can initially choose from three different classes, each with a different mix of weapons and armor, and each can transform between a robot shape, a hovercraft, and an armored motorcycle. A lot of work seems to have gone into creating special effects for the Gunbike's weapons, which only add to the game's consciously anime-style production design.

Ragnacoeur is SME's attempt to put a new wrinkle on the Japanese console RPG, again presented in 3D. The map changes at least three times, and the battles are also in 3D. While the game seems well-constructed, the main point of interest is the game's MCBS, or Memory Card Battle System. After completing the game alone, players can then transfer their character to a PlayStation memory card and pit it against another player in a special versus mode, using all the experience and items collected during the single-player game. To be more than a gimmick, this will require a large variety of choice in how players can develop their characters. Whether this is in fact the case, at this early date is still unclear.



Ragnacoeur is SME's first attempt at the traditional Japanese console RPG, to which a Versus mode has been added.



Tenchūr's Japanese castle setting is completely open to the player, who can roam, hide, and fight just about anywhere.

The last title currently under development at SME is Dam Dam Stompland, one of those odd, refreshingly genre-defying novelty games that emerge from Japan every now and again. Based on one of the most childish of children's games, the object is simple: Step on other players' shadows. The game appears to be colorful and fast, however, and could well be worth a look upon release.

Sony Music Entertainment appears to be one of the more creative and interesting names in PlayStation development lately, based on its most recent releases and what is known about forthcoming ones. If the level of quality can be maintained, and the gameplay can be made to match the visuals, this will be something to shout about indeed.



Yup, It's Dam Dam Stompland. Coming from the makers of Putappa, however, it somehow doesn't seem so strange.

Available
August 21

The future is about
to become history

EXCALIBUR 2555 AD

Journey to the far future to save the distant past.
Battle hand-to-hand. Solve intriguing puzzles.
Wield powerful magic. Explore a huge 3D world.
Your mission: retrieve the legendary sword
Excalibur.

Featuring over 200 locations, 60 different
characters, full speech, and incredible realistic
light-sourcing, Excalibur 2555 is an absolute epic.

"...could well do for 3D action adventures what
Tomb Raider did for 3D platformers"
— Edge

"Excalibur 2555 is one of the most unique
3D games ever... a really, really cool game"
— Diehard Gamefan



PC
CD
ROM



SIRTECH

Tel.: (315) 393-6633 Fax: (315) 393-1525
To order, visit your retailer or call: 1-800-447-1230

www.sir-tech.com



PlayStation and the PlayStation logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.



KISS THE ABYSS



IMPLOSIVE REAL-TIME 3D GRAPHICS.



DEEP SEA® MULTI-PLAYER
GAME MODES.



10 TOTALLY DIFFERENT
HULL-CRUSHING ENVIRONMENTS.



PIRANHA SWARMS, MAGNETIC SUCKERS,
DEPTH CHARGES AND MORE!

This is what they really mean when they talk

LOCKAWA

about totally immersive gameplay. Take a dip in



these sub-infested waters for a spot of nuclear



fishin'. 12 subaquatic psychos want to send you

BOTTOM LINER

down and they've got the torpedoes to prove it.



Don't worry. You'll know you're in too deep

STALINGRAD

when the water pressure caves your head in.



Look like you're in deep shit.

ARCHIMEDES

FROM THE DEVELOPERS OF TWISTED METAL™,
JET MOTO™ AND WARHAWK™,

PlayStation



LA GRIFFE

Check out the game demo and interview with the
creators of Critical Depth on this month's demo disc.



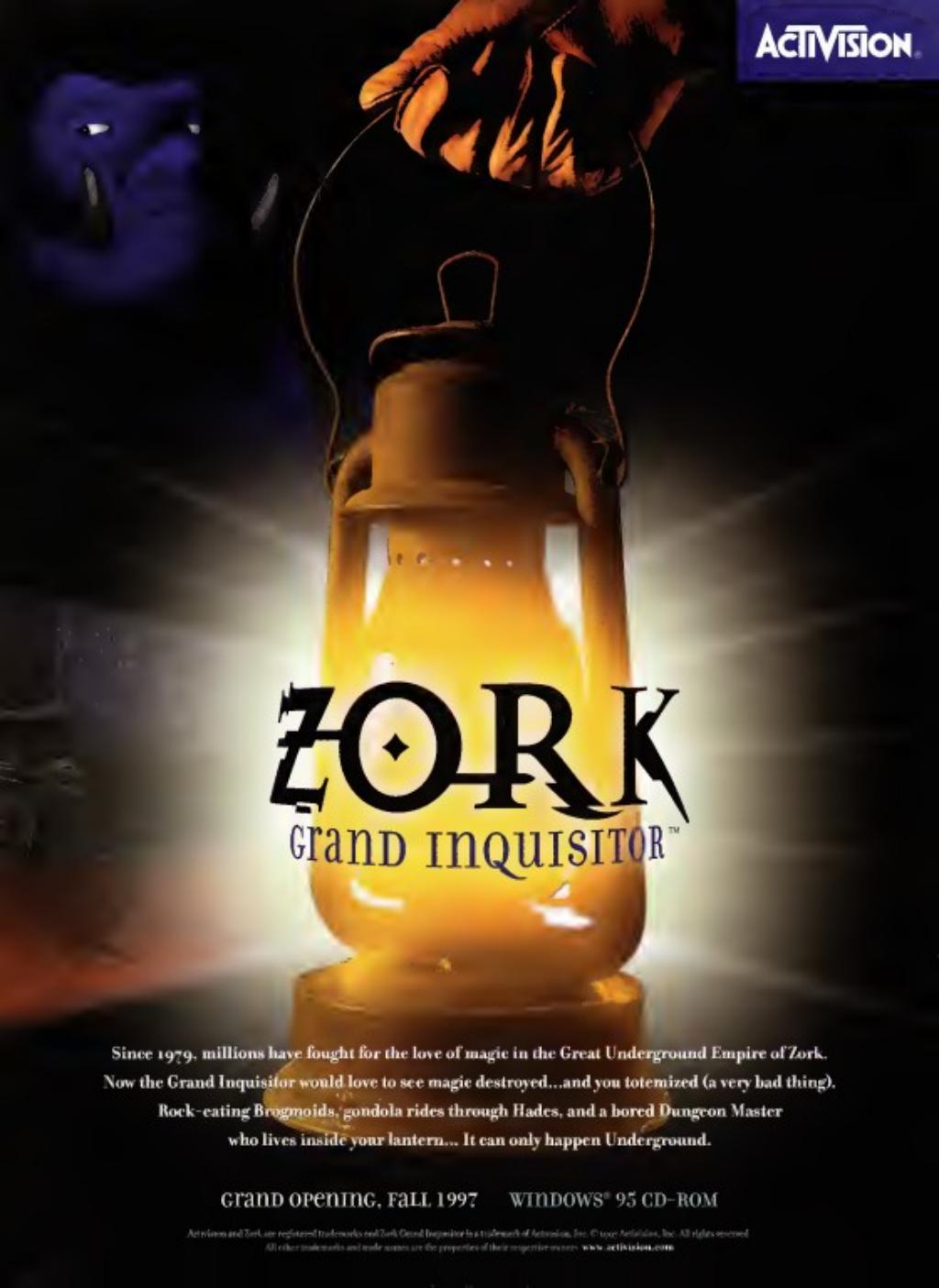
©1997 SONY BMG Entertainment Networks Inc. Twisted Metal, Warhawk and Jet Moto are trademarks of Toys "R" Us Inc.
Entertainment One, Twisted Metal, Warhawk and Jet Moto were published by Sony Computer Entertainment America. Critical Depth, SONY BMG and the SONY BMG logo are trademarks of SONY BMG Entertainment Networks Inc. PlayStation and the PlayStation logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment America. Twisted Metal, Warhawk and Jet Moto are trademarks of Toys "R" Us Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective companies.
All other trademarks are the property of their respective companies.

>YOU ARE STANDING
IN AN OPEN FIELD WEST
OF A WHITE HOUSE...

YOU'LL always remember your
FIRST TIME UNDERGROUND.



Actual 360° views from the game.



ZORK
Grand Inquisitor™

Since 1979, millions have fought for the love of magic in the Great Underground Empire of Zork.
Now the Grand Inquisitor would love to see magic destroyed...and you totemized (a very bad thing).

Rock-eating Brogmoids, gondola rides through Hades, and a bored Dungeon Master
who lives inside your lantern... It can only happen Underground.

GRAND OPENING, FALL 1997 WINDOWS® 95 CD-ROM



Atari comes alive

Can one of videogaming's most tattered names reclaim its place among the greatest game makers of the world?

Despite the demise of Atari Corp. — the company responsible for the Jaguar, among other crimes — Atari Games, the coin-op game division (which was retained by Warner when the console/computer divisions of the company were sold off to Jack Tramiel), is not dead. In fact, with the recent success of titles like *Mace* and the beloved *San Francisco Rush*, Atari Games (now a wholly owned subsidiary of Midway Games) is coming off its best fiscal performance in years. So how is it that a company that seemed to have so little idea how to succeed just a little over a year ago is now getting it so right? The answer begins with the drop of a quarter and a company getting back to its roots.

For all the talk of arcades being a brutal place to do business, there has always been a handful of success stories,

No other company has known more ups and downs than Atari

and Atari Games may be rejoicing. Midway, Sega, and Namco as one of those fortunate few again.

Perhaps no other company in the game industry has known more ups and downs than Atari, and the latest chapter of good fortune is just another example of how a shift in focus and a devotion to quality can dramatically change the outlook of a company in a very short time. Things first started looking up again for Atari Games with the release of *Area 51* for arcades (some credit must also be given to *Primal Rage*, but most of the company's fortune from its prehistoric brawler came from merchandising). Although the low-grade video and track-based action of *Area 51* didn't impress critics, the game scored big financially.

But *Area 51* and *Primal Rage* were only small signs of things to come for Atari Games. The big change in the



It was on the back of *San Francisco Rush* that Atari Games finally and definitively found its way back into the hearts of gamers

company's fortunes came with the sale to Williams/Midway. Midway, unlike Time Warner, knows how to make popular arcade games, and more importantly, knows how to leave developers alone to make the best games they can.

The parent company was rewarded with *Maximum Force* (a follow-up to *Area 51*, *Mace*, and *San Francisco Rush*). Although the first two games sold fine, *SF Rush* has been the major hit for Atari. Based on 3Dfx's Voodoo technology, both *SF Rush* and *Mace* were cheaper to develop than a purely proprietary system (a cost savings passed on to buyers), and both looked great. Atari Games is keen on continuing to utilize 3Dfx technology in its arcade games but insists on customizing the technology to its liking via its own hardware R & D efforts.

And so, once again, Atari is back. Can the company that created the video arcade game continue to thrive in an industry that is as demanding of its winners as it is cruel to its losers? This month **Next Generation** talks to Atari Games President Dan Van Elderen and other key staff, and takes a look at two new games designed to maintain Atari's current positive momentum, *San Francisco Rush: The Rock, Alcatraz Edition* and *The "Juko" Project*.



The stunning *Mace* is another example of Atari Games' recent success



Atari Games is betting it knows what the player wants



ng alphas

San Francisco Rush: The Rock, Alcatraz Edition



Still running on an enhanced 3Dfx Voodoo board, *The Rock, Alcatraz Edition* offers all of the stunning visuals found in the original

It's always a dangerous proposition to tamper with perfection, but the *Rush* team just may have found a way to do it with this promising update



Before the release of *San Francisco Rush*, the gut-wrenching joyride through the hilly streets of "the City by the Bay," the Alan brand name carried about as much respect with new-school gamers as, say, Wrangler jeans do with socially aware middle schoolers. That changed as soon as coin-op players got a taste for driving serious muscle cars Bullit-style through some of the city's most famous locales. Not since Sega's *Daytona U.S.A.*, in fact, have gamers been invited to feel so good about American-style racing, and arcade players have shown their appreciation with quarter drop after quarter drop.

So if the game is doing so well, why does it need a face-lift? *San Francisco Rush: The Rock, Alcatraz Edition* was begun as just that — a slight upgrade for arcade owners to get a little more life from their initial investment without a major financial commitment — but the project soon became bigger than that. And so *The Rock* is now close to what many companies would call a fully realized sequel. And yet, arcade owners still won't need to buy a new unit to offer the new version to players. In fact, *The Rock* is just a ROM update for the original, and runs on the same 3Dfx-based hardware, an architecture that Senior 3D Animator

Format:	Arcade
Publisher:	Atari Games
Developer:	Atari Games
Release Date:	November 1997
Origin:	U.S.

Spencer Lindsay describes as "great for the artists." Says Lindsay, "A huge vista of texture-mapped polygons just opened up before us."

The new feature list for *San Francisco Rush: The Rock, Alcatraz*



Among the new cars offered, the yellow cab is one of the most surprising by way of performance



Alcatraz Edition features
new tracks and
additional shortcuts

Edition includes five new tracks (four of which are enhanced versions of tracks developed for the N64 home version of the game), four new cars, and several new shortcuts added to the original tracks. The fifth new track, developed specifically for the upgrade, is set on the island of Alcatraz and offers all the excitement of the additional appeal of fantastic stunt-driving elements. Imagine an expanded version of the half pipe "shortcut" on track 2 of the original. The new cars give the game an even wider appeal with more of a streetcar emphasis (check out the yellow cab), and the new shortcuts give even the original tracks a whole new sense of excitement, especially when players are trying to get

an edge in multiplayer races. Ultimately, the new edition delivers all the fun of the original (literally) while giving experienced players entirely new challenges to face.

And so does this mean that there will not be a *San Francisco Rush 2?* No, in fact the wheels are already in motion to create an arcade sequel (not to be confused with the forthcoming *California Speed*, also from Atari Games), from scratch — possibly with 3D's next generation of processor driving the 3D Concourse series. Staff Producer John Ray: "I am very excited about continuing. *Rush* was such a strong property, I think we have to continue capitalizing on it. People love it and we love working on it."



The new tracks feature
all the heart-stopping
action of the originals



The "Juko" Project

Now that the racing market is sured-up with *San Francisco Rush*, Atari Games is turning its attention to the fighting genre

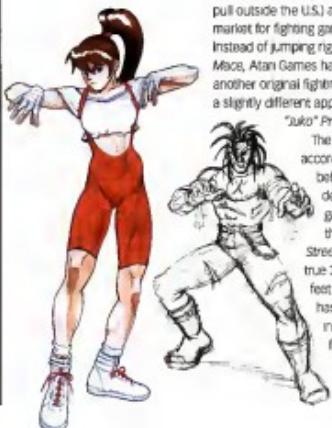
Though critically acclaimed and a small-scale financial success, Atari Games' last arcade brawler *Mace* suffered from a limited appeal due to, among other things, its medieval art style (a look without much pull outside the U.S.) and a deflated market for fighting games in general. So instead of jumping right into a sequel for *Mace*, Atari Games has set out to create another original fighting game series with a slightly different approach, called the "Juko" Project.

The primary objective, according to the team behind the development of the game, is to capture the speed of the *Street Fighter* series in a true 3D fighting engine (a feat the developers feel has yet to be realized in any of the 3D fighters). The game features an anime-style cast of

Format:	Arcade
Publisher:	Atari Games
Developer:	Atari Games
Release Date:	TBA
Origin:	U.S.

characters from around the world, "no matter where you are in the world," suggests Game Director James Goddard, "your hero is there." The game should also offer a very *Street Fighter* style of play set in a true 3D environment with a heavy emphasis on play in the Z-axis. Says Sr Vice President & Executive Producer Mark Pierce: "I think part of the boredom that's out there right now is because you're on revs three and four of all these games. Hopefully with this hybrid [2D speed, 3D gameplay], we can create something that stands out." He later adds, "We have the basic structure to offer the standard forms of entertainment, such as a driving game and a gun game, but we're trying with *Juko* to fill out the portfolio and establish our fighting game family. We came close with *Primal Rage*, but people don't really want to be dinosaurs."

Look for more detailed coverage of The "Juko" Project in upcoming issues of *Next Generation*





An interview with

A brief moment in time called Atari, with President and CEO Dan Van Elderen.

NG: You've been at Atari since the beginning, right?

DV: I began at Atari Games right at the very beginning, in 1973, working with Nolan Bushnell. Actually, at the time I was working on the line, troubleshooting black-and-white palm games. So I've been through the entire rise and fall of Atari several times. My background is on the technical side — hardware engineering in particular. Back when I began, it was before the advent of the microprocessor. For the first couple of years our products were all TTL Discrete Logic based products. We didn't have the benefit of programmers or animators, and it was typically an engineer designing the games.

I actually began when we were in the process of building Pong, but I wasn't involved in the original creation of the game. The first product I was actively involved in, from a design standpoint, was Tank, which we did in 1974; I think it was the first videogame that introduced the concept of shooting projectiles. Probably my next major involvement with a project was on the original Indy 800 project — an eight-player racing game where you had a 25-inch horizontally mounted monitor and two steering wheels on each side of a four-sided cockpit cabinet. That really was the first product to introduce the concept of multiplayer (i.e., more than just one or two).

The next noteworthy product that I was involved in was the design of Sprint II. This was the first game that actually introduced the concept of a computer car that had the intelligence to drive itself around the track — not necessarily just in a canned predetermined course, but in a semi-intelligent manner, depending on how you were doing.

Then beginning in approximately 1980, I assumed responsibility for heading up the overall product development at Atari Games and basically headed up product development here through what were really our glory years in the '80s, when we did everything from Asteroids to Missile Command, Temps, Battlezone, Gauntlet, Hard Drivin', and Race Drivin'.

Then in 1989 I was asked to move over and head up our newly formed consumer division (Tengen). I headed up Tengen from 1989 through 1995, at which point we began producing

products for the original NES system. We were one of the first ones to jump on board with Sega when it introduced its Genesis. And in 1995 the decision was made to recombine the two divisions. Basically we all got back under one common umbrella and I was asked to head up the whole thing.

NG: How would you define the company today?



I actually began when we were in the process of building Pong

DV: In terms of defining what Atari is, I think at its roots it's always been primarily a coin-op based company. That is the platform or the medium on which we've always created our most significant content. And that's really to a large degree why fairly recently we've gone back to our roots. It's tough to survive, much less make money in the coin-op business. You have very lengthy development cycles, very costly development, very high risk of failure, and even when you are successful, relatively modest returns on that investment. But because it is the ideal medium to create content, once you have created on that platform, you're able to really capitalize on it.

So that's the model — our roots go back to coin-op, most of our significant accomplishments were implemented in the coin-op medium, and that's the model that we're following today. We've probably got 75 to 80% of our resources focused exclusively on coin-op.

NG: Could a successful run in coin-op eventually lead us to a day where Atari releases another consumer hardware unit?

DV: Anything is certainly possible. But I would see that as being unlikely. I think we've recognized that our strength is in creating content. Now, in

order to create content in the arcade business, you have to be able to continually push technology to do that next unique, novel, or technologically interesting thing. But I don't see us getting, per se, back into the hardware manufacturing business in terms of manufacturing our own console or platform. This is not to say that something so unique or different couldn't come up in the way of technology, but I think it's pretty unlikely given our current emphasis.

NG: You've recently found success in 3Dx-based hardware. Will you continue on this route?

DV: I'd say the majority of what we're currently working on is 3Dx-based architecture. Not necessarily just the current generation of its chipset, but we're also potentially looking at stuff that we anticipate coming down the road. I would say as a company right now, if you looked at what was in development, probably two-thirds is related directly to that. There are other

technologies that we are looking at and continue to experiment with, but right now, I think 3Dx is still delivering for us the best price performance.

There is some tremendous chip development that has already gone on. That's something that we'd like to continue to take advantage of in terms of figuring out ways of integrating that technology into our systems. That's something, for us, that's really not new or unique to 3Dx — we began doing this several years ago. In fact one of our more successful product lines, originally Area 51 and more recently Maximum Force, are based upon the original Jaguar chipset. Because of that, we delivered some very cost-effective but still fairly powerful hardware performance.

NG: Do you see this borrowing of PC technologies as the future of coin-op?

DV: I would expect that certainly there is going to be a significant tendency to try to take advantage of this. I think where I may differ from some is that at the end of the day, it's the content that drives the success of the product and not so much the particular technology it's based on. The technology, in terms of performance and cost effectiveness, can make a difference as to how good something looks or how quick it reacts or how cost effective it is, but at the end of the day, it still comes down to the quality of the content. It's the game, it's the game, it's the game.



This is probably a dangerous statement to make, but I'm one of those who believe that we will not see any major new creators of coin-op content beyond the existing base that exists today. I say this for a combination of reasons. Certainly a very significant reason is due to the fact that barriers to entry and succeeding in the arcade business are extremely high, in terms of technology, but more importantly in terms of creating arcade games that can succeed. The typical development can run anywhere from one and a half to three years and can cost anywhere from \$2.5 million, and if you're lucky, you can get a 50% success rate on something that can be in and out of production within 60 to 90 days and then you're on to the next project.

I think a lot of it comes down to having the experience to understand the mentality of what the arcade player wants; it's quite different in many ways from what you need to do on a platform or PC-based product. In a typical arcade product you have to sell the essence of that game in 90 seconds. You've got to sell it in such a way that the player wants to do it again and again and again. If you do a one-time sale with him and that's it, you've lost, whereas you can get by with that in a consumer or PC market with clever marketing or a big name license attached to it. [In arcades] you have to sell to the exact same player over and over again, just based on the thrill you give him in 90 or 120 seconds. It's difficult to architect and design games that can successfully do that. At the end of the day, that's going to be more of a factor than who's using what chipset.

NG: Does your need to sell the same player over and over again limit the genres that you can explore?

DV: We have concerns because there is such a limited number of genres that have been successful over recent years. You've got driving games, fighting games, and shooting games, and they are probably, in that order, the three most significant categories. The fourth category which is a sports category is a significant notch below the other three. Then you've got a very minor category which is sort of a quiz, puzzle category. But the vast majority of the business today in the arcade are in those three genres. That is of concern to us because when you look at the variety of categories you offer, you always run the danger of boring the player. I think that is finally starting to happen in fighting games. We're almost seeing a yawn every time a new, great fighting game is introduced from both the distribution network, as well as the player base. That having been said, it's still your safest, most

conservative development bet to develop a product in one of those three main genres.

We probably focus about half of our development into those three categories and traditional products that one might expect to see coming. We put the other half of our development into other new, undefined genres or categories, in terms of trying to find that something that is unique or different. Though we might put equal resources into each of those, at the end of the

being able to deliver what we're currently seeing in the arcade?

DV: I'd say they are as close as ever. But frankly, it's a cycle that I've seen before. This is part of the reason we believe we need to keep pushing the technology to where you're always going to that next level. Yes, it is as close as it has ever been, but I think that arcades will move on again and the cycle will continue.

NG: Could you explain how Atari achieved its current relationship with Midway?

DV: Atari Games is now a wholly owned subsidiary of Midway Games. Atari was initially formed back in 1972

and founded by Nolan Bushnell along with some other initial investors. He sold out to what was then Warner Communications in the 1975 time frame. Warner, which eventually became Time Warner, owned either all or the controlling majority of the company up until 1984. In 1984 it sold off the biggest part of the company, which was the home computer and consumer division, to Jack Tramiel, and that's when we became Atari Corp. In 1985 they formed what is today known as Atari Games Corp. Initially Namco had an investment in the company and was actually a part owner of it. But that ownership was subsequently bought out in about '89-'90 and so from that point on, we were a wholly owned subsidiary of Time Warner.

Time Warner decided in 1995 that it wanted to exit from the videogame business. And so it approached myself and the other management staff here and said go find a new partner or

somebody to buy you, which was an approach, though it might have been a little bit shocking, that I appreciated. At least they didn't just come to us one day and say, "Here's

your new boss." It was more like, "Go find a new boss." And frankly, one of the very first companies we approached in that respect was WMS, WMS Industries. We immediately hit it off, both because we'd known each other for so long as respected competitors, but also because it was one of the few companies that we came into contact with who were our kind of people and who understood the arcade business and the difficulty of trying to succeed in it.

So in March of '96, Atari Games was acquired completely by WMS Industries. Later on that summer WMS restructured and basically took all of its videogame assets and put them into one company, and that's what was launched through an IPO as Midway Games Inc. So Midway Games Inc. basically represents all of the videogame businesses or divisions of what had been WMS Industries.

Until 18 months ago, our international business ... was almost nonexistent

day, you might see two or three of the more standard genre games coming out versus one of the other because your risk of failure is so much higher with untested genres.

NG: How much success have you had in the international market?

DV: Historically we have done reasonably well in Europe, on probably a comparable basis to what we do in the U.S., but in most other international markets, historically Atari has done very poorly. Up until probably 18 months ago, our international business outside of Europe was almost nonexistent. We have, however, had some fairly significant success in the last 12 to 18 months in developing international markets, in particular the Asian market.

NG: What do you see as the future of arcades, and what are you doing to be a part of it?

DV: I think we inherently believe that there will always be an arcade. I think it's something that

We inherently believe that there will always be an arcade

will exist because of the social environment. I think it's also something that has succeeded at its best when it was able to deliver an experience that couldn't be nearly as satisfactorily duplicated in the home environment. I think the challenge to us, and certainly where we're focusing our energies, is to continue to deliver things that provide an experience in the arcade that is unique and different.

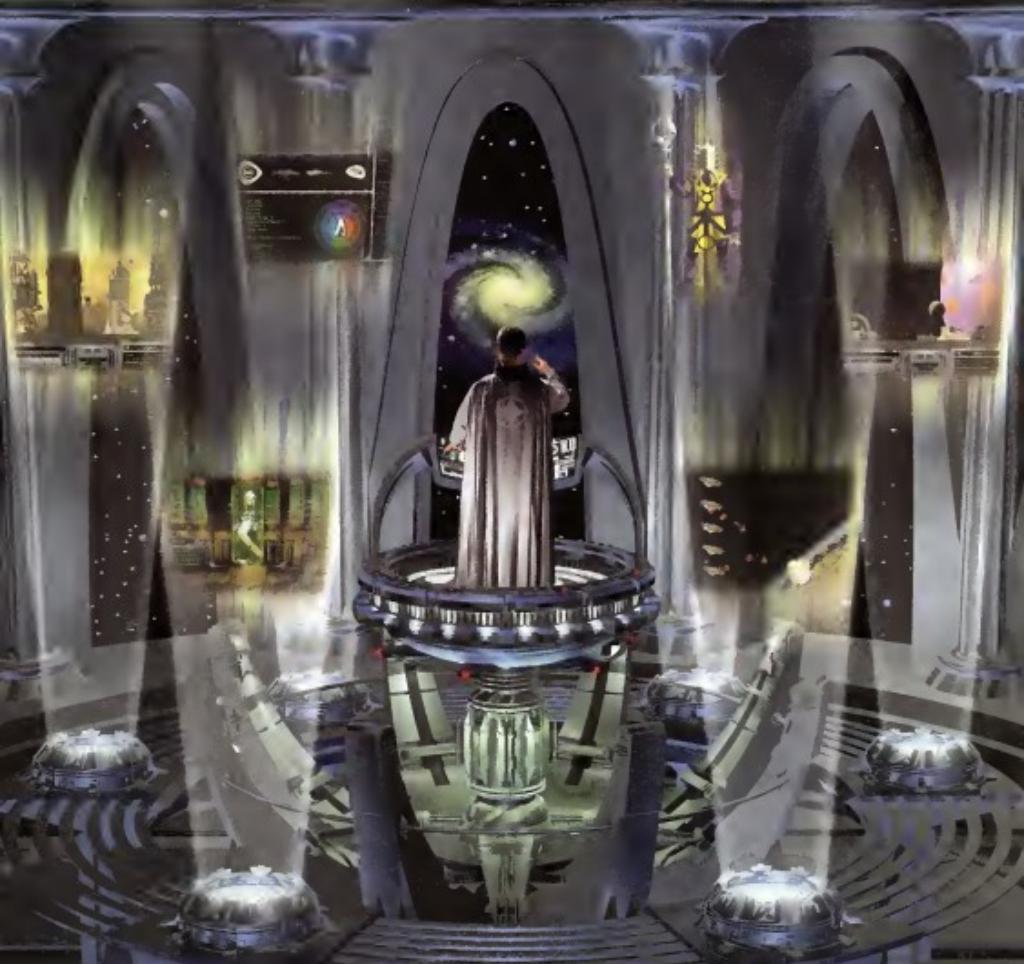
Now, on the opposite side of that double-edged sword, is that the second we've done creating that particularly successful product in the arcade medium, we're challenged to say, "OK, now we'll take that to the home and make it equally successful there so we can actually capitalize on the content we've created and make some money on it."

NG: Would you say that the home systems that are in place right now are closer than ever to



PAX IMPERIA

EMINENT DOMAIN



The largest, most sophisticated game universe ever created is at your control.

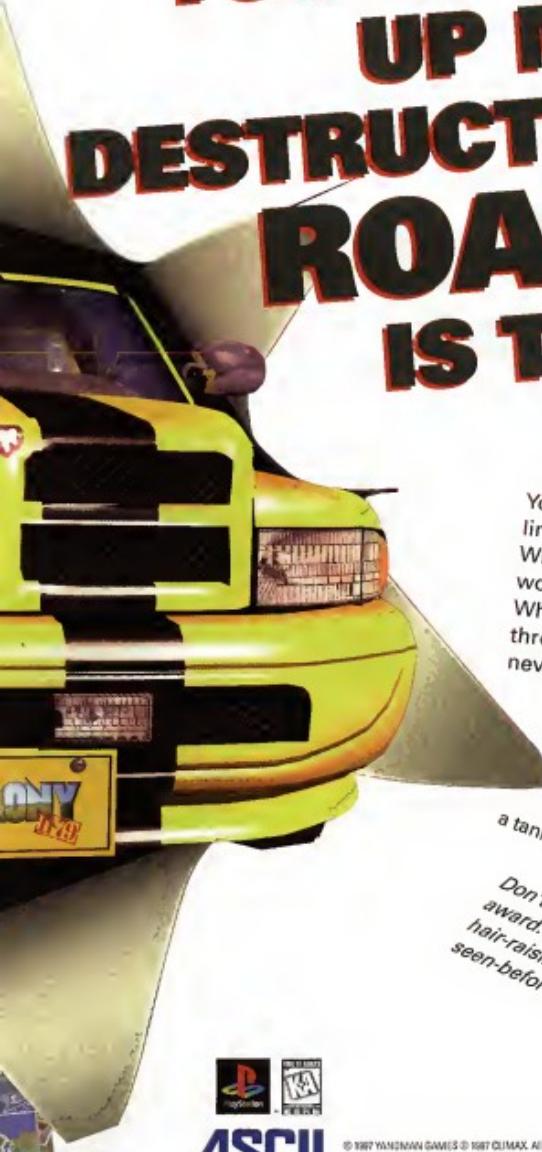


WWW.PAXIMPERIA.COM





YOU'RE SERVING UP MASSIVE DESTRUCTION AND ROADKILL IS THE MAIN COURSE.



You'll cross over more than a few double yellow lines in this driving game of mass destruction. With limited time to reach your objective, you won't be waiting for any lights to turn green. Whoops! You forgot to knock before pummeling through a neighbor's living room window. Tact never was your strong suit.

Your weapon is your wheels. And, if you're good, real good, you'll get to drive up to 22 of 'em. Like a limo, a bad-ass pickup, a formula one racer, hell, even a tank if your hot-wiring skills are up to snuff. Don't expect any citizen-of-the-month award. Expect spine-tingling action, hair-raising crashes and the never-seen-before track cam view.



ASCII
ENTERTAINMENT

© 1997 YAHONIAN GAMES © 1997 CLIMAX. All rights reserved. ASCII Entertainment, Folyon 11-79, and the Folyon 11-79 logo are trademarks of ASCII Entertainment Software, Inc. PlayStation and the PlayStation logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All other brand and product names are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective holders.

Metropolis



Witcher is based on the novels of Polish author Andrzej Sapkowski — a different flavor of novel than ones published in the West

Ever heard of a game from Poland? Neither had we. Good thing we checked



Although most U.S. gamers probably don't think of Poland as a seething hotbed of cutting-edge games, it just goes to show you can never tell where the next big thing is going to happen. Based in Lublin, Poland, Metropolis Software House was founded in 1992 by Adrian Chmilarz. "Lucky," Chmilarz says, "I can't find any one thing that sets us apart being a developer from Poland. You might find this boring, but the Polish market mirrors the world market: if a game is a hit worldwide, then it's also a hit in Poland. I love diversity. I hope people will say Metropolis is a Polish game developer, not a developer representing Polish trends. Look what happened to France. French guys are known for their excellent graphics and shallow gameplay. But such stereotypes work usually against anyone from a given country who makes something different. There's almost no such thing as a 'U.S. kind of developer' or 'U.K. kind of developer.' I hope the same will happen to Poland and that we will be able to create games that will be recognizable by their quality, not the place of development."

In some cases, though, a country's culture can add to a game. "Sometimes adding a bit of national stuff is very good," Chmilarz says. "Just look at

Japanese RPGs. Their religion, beliefs, and imagination produce really outstanding things. Our history — 50 years of fighting against communism, Slavic mythology — it all settles in our minds and will surely affect our games."

Metropolis released its first game, *Mystery of the Statue*, in 1993. "I practically made it myself," Chmilarz jokes. "I took various cool pictures in Saint-Tropez and of one of those old Polish churches — where we found real skeletons from the 17th century — then I made a game out of them. I coded, I made some special effects, retouched all the pictures. It was the first Polish PC adventure, and it sold extremely well." *Teenagent* followed in 1995. Distributed as shareware, it won a Silver Award from UK magazine *PC Format*. *Katharsis*, a 3D

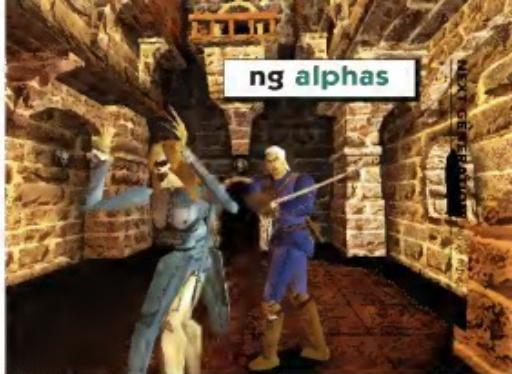


Comparing the NURBS model (top) to the finished render (bottom) shows the developer's attention to detail

shooter; was released earlier this year, and an animated graphic adventure, *The Prince and the Coward*, is available now.

Metropolis has grown to 20 full-time programmers, artists, and designers, and is almost finished with *Reflux*, a 3D, real-time, action/strategy game. Next up in the works is a pair of adventure/RPGs — *Witcher* and *Haunted City*, which Chmielarz describes as a working title. “[It] has almost nothing to do with the game, it just somehow stuck.”

Most of Metropolis’ games are what Chmielarz calls “story games.” “We believe there are two kind of games,” he explains. “Twitch: games and stories. Twitch games are like Quake or Heroes of Might and Magic. The essence is interactivity — the player is able to do with [the game] whatever he or she wishes: configure, change the story, build homemade levels, etc. Story games are the ones when a game designer wants to tell the player a story, to present a fantasy world. Such games are often more linear than twitch games, but not necessarily. Metropolis is more interested in story games than twitch games. We want to tell stories, to make players cry



Metropolis founder Adrian Chmielarz says of *Witcher*: “This is a game for adults. Not just sex and violence, but serious psychological issues”



or laugh, to raise issues impossible to raise in twitch games. A vision of a game designer can be much more involving, provide much more drama than the world in which the plot is an excuse for the engine. Of course, we don’t think twitch games are bad, it’s just that 75% of our efforts go to story games, and only 25% to twitch games. This is a question of personal choice, not a matter of which kinds of games are better or worse.”

Although it’s being developed for PC, not a console, *Haunted City* follows squarely (no pun intended) in the fertile



Haunted City uses pre-rendered backgrounds and real-time characters. Graphically the team is deliberately gunning for FFVII-level quality

ng alphas



Metropolis' current release is *The Prince and the Coward*, produced in cooperation with the U.K.'s Revolution Software, developer of the graphic adventure *Circle of Blood*.

ground down by Final Fantasy VII. A deliberate attempt to create a Japanese-style RPG, although less stylized and more realistic in design, the game uses pre-rendered backgrounds and 3D characters to tell the story of a NATO operative sent into the mutant-infested city of Gorky 17. "Well," Chmelař says, "to explain it the fastest way, simply think of FFXI — the plot and design are very different, but leave the same amount of adventure, then add a bit more strategy. In the 3D battles. Usually in RPGs the only strategy is to find the correct weapon for each monster. But we want to add some other elements from other games, like special mixed attacks and the importance of the team's formation, and put some adventure parts into the battles, and so on. However, we're also putting a lot of effort into assuring that the game is easy to get into, has an intuitive and simple interface, and is a lot of fun."

"Haunted City" is being rendered entirely using Real3D. "It's one of the best raytracers out there," Chmelař insists. "It's a NURBS-based program with a lot of features not seen in Softimage or Alias. None of the backgrounds uses tiles. Every location is a new artwork." Each realtime 3D character is made up of around 1,300 polygons, and the final game will feature MMX enhancements and 3D sound. Metropolis is also working to support 3Dfx-based cards directly. "Currently this is the only 3D card we support in a native mode," Chmelař explains. "As for the software renderer, previously we came up with our own, but Direct3D is a real improvement, and although the frame rate is still worse than in our own renderer, we are considering switching to Direct3D. This way we will assure better quality for those with any of the new 3D cards."

Unlike most console-style RPGs, monster encounters are not random — the player can see them coming — and the designers are currently deciding



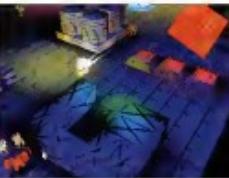
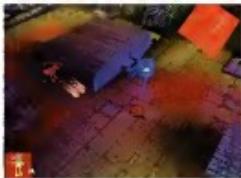
Haunted City is an attempt to bring a console-style RPG to PC

whether combat will be realtime, turn-based, or, as in FFXI, a bit of both.

"The city and its inhabitants have a lot of surprises to offer," Chmelař boasts. "The plot is nonlinear; although the overall story is To assure some replayability, we will add many subtle touches, secrets, and probably four endings."

"Witcher" is based on the stories of Polish fantasy author Andrzej Sapkowski. "Sapkowski is absolute number one in Poland," Chmelař enthuses, "and his series about the witcher Geralt is a megahit. It's very good reading, full of imagination, a great vision of a fantasy world. However, we didn't choose Witcher because of his commercial success. We chose him because we think it's ideal material for an adventure game."

Within the game's (and novel's) fantasy world, a "witcher" is a kind of cross between a wizard and an assassin, a profession that requires years of training.



Reflexx was Metropolis' entry into the realtime strategy genre — although the team insists on calling it "action/strategy" rather than "realtime" strategy

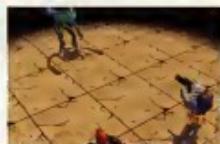


and various potions and drugs to achieve. "Whenever a village or a town is harassed by a monster," Chmielewski explains, "people hire witches. After such training, a witcher is no longer like an average human. He can see in the dark, move faster than a common man, and so on." However, this also makes witches the objects of some distrust, fear, and even hate, and the player's character Geralt is the most powerful and hated of them all.

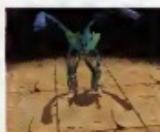
Built entirely in 3D and seen from a third-person perspective, *Witcher*, like Sierra's *Mask of Eternity*, combines action with adventure game elements. The combat engine is similar to ones found in weapons-based fighting games, but as in *Bushido Blade*, a single blow can be deadly. "Usually it's very hard to orientate in 3D," Chmielewski explains, "and there are a lot of problems for the player with the correct position and such. But we have found a way to simplify it and to make it transparent to players, so they can focus on the fight itself, not on the controls."

"This is a game for adults. The term 'for adults' does not mean the game is just about sex and violence. I mean there will be some serious, psychological issues. We're not heading in the same direction as the creators of *Carmageddon* or *Postal*. We will give the player some sex and violence, but next to that, we want to raise some moral issues to think about. If you have seen *Blade Runner* or *Bad Lieutenant*, you know what we mean."

The bulk of Metropolis' output looks quite impressive indeed and more impressive still for having come from such a relatively unknown development house with only a few years of experience. Plus, working out of Eastern Europe has its own problems. "They not to have problems," Chmielewski cracks, "when your taxes are up to 40%, VAT is 22%, and social security is obligatory and takes 52% of the payment. The problems are normal, just like in any other country where people are paid a couple of times less than in a 'normal' economy. For example, we need motion capture equipment. A



Haunted City switches to realtime 3D during combat. Although the background here is a placeholder, the characters are complete



And, of course, players can expect more than a few flashy effects

very good one was shown at the latest Siggraph, and it looks ass, but costs \$30,000. For an average development team this is affordable. For us, not. We have to wait until we find a publisher, and I could write a thousand pages about the troubles of finding a publisher — you wouldn't believe me if I told you."

However, Chmielewski and the rest of Metropolis are undaunted. "We will fight until we succeed," he insists. "I hope *Reflux*, *Witcher*, or *Haunted City* are the proof we're pretty good fighters. This is a tough business, but I like it this way. Whenever I tell the team the story of Id Software, or the story of how Richard Garriott started out, or about 21st Century and its pinball game, it only gives them a good kick to work harder and do even more amazing things. My current favorite story is about Romero. A journalist asked him if the success of *Wolfenstein* surprised him. 'No,' he answered, 'from the very beginning we knew we had something special. Something revolutionary.' We have the same feeling here."

"FAST, CHALLENGING, AND TOTALLY ABSORBING"

-NEXT GENERATION

"AN INNOVATIVE BLEND OF ACTION AND STRATEGY"

-PC GAMER

"POTENTIAL TO BE THE GAME OF THE YEAR"

-ADRENALINE VAULT

"UPRISING FORGES NEW GROUND"

-CNET GAMECENTER



CYCLONE
STRATEGY



PC
CD-ROM

A Division of The 3DO Company

WWW.3DO.COM

JOIN OR DIE.



[STUNNING 3-D GRAPHICS]



[INTENSE MULTIPLAYER]



[MAP-SCALE DESTRUCTION]



[STRATEGIC DEPTH]



[HEART-POUNDING ACTION]



[COMMAND ENTIRE ARMIES]

UPRISING

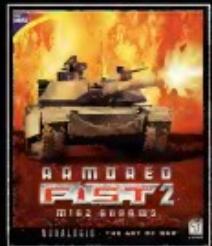
FUTURE. WAR. IMMERSION.

Uprising, 1992, Cygnus Studios, and the 3D and Cygnus Studios logo are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of The 3D Company. All other trademarks and/or registered trademarks are property of their respective owners. ©1992 The 3D Company. All rights reserved.

THE



F-22™ Raptor™



Armored Fist® 2



Comanche® 3

**AVAILABLE
NOW!**

Visit your
favorite retailer
or call

800.858.0322

www.novalogic.com



ART OF WAR™



VII 2004M 1013 UHMC

NOVALOGIC®



Quest 64

T*HQ joins the race to release
Nintendo 64's first RPG



Format:	Nintendo 64
Publisher:	T*HQ
Developer:	Imagineer
Release Date:	Q2 1998
Origin:	Japan



While the game may look a bit like Mario, there are many more things to do and see, and many more characters to interact with (above). Items can be found anywhere (top left)



Since Quest is an RPG, a great deal of the game takes place indoors

The first RPGs on Nintendo systems have always been classics. Dragon Warrior, on the 8-bit NES, spawned five sequels and is widely considered to be the first of the great console RPGs. Final Fantasy II, one of Super Nintendo's first great titles, was good enough to counter Sega's Phantasy Star series. Now T*HQ intends to keep the streak going with its sophomore effort for Nintendo 64, a simply titled yet intriguing game called Quest 64.

Quest 64 looks like a stripped-down Zelda 64, but as Nintendo's eagerly anticipated sequel is pushed back again and again, T*HQ's project is on schedule to be the first RPG for the system when it's released in the second quarter of 1998. And when Zelda is heavily relying on the name recognition generation incantations, T*HQ is hoping a tried-and-true perspective (that of Mario 64) and some basic RPG features will mean

success on the 64-bit system.

The game looks a bit like Zelda and controls a bit like Mario 64. If this sounds like a lot of "looks like" and "that of's," don't worry — Quest 64 plays unlike any game on the market, and certainly unlike any available RPG.

"Quest is really a true RPG in the traditional vein," says Steve Ryno, vice president of product development. "The only thing it has in common with Zelda is its camera angles and viewpoints. Quest has more RPG-type battles, more in-depth quests in terms of talking to people, gathering items, and building up your character. Zelda just plays to more of the original game."



While these shots only show the main character wielding a club, there will be many other weapons for players to find, such as swords and axes.

Little is known about the game's story at this time, although the developers promise multiple characters to interact with, as well as three unique continents to explore and quest in. This won't be a game players can finish in one sitting, either. "Compared to most games, it will run long," says Rymo. "I would be lying if I had a specific time, but it will be the same length, if not longer, than a Final Fantasy or Wild Arms."

The game's combat system was designed with a nod to Square's 16-bit classic, Chrono Trigger. When enemies are encountered, the screen will lock in place, and battle takes place in real time from there. When players become equipped with different types of weapons, they will appear on the

character's iconic representation. Magic is also very traditional, with the 20 plus spells resulting from combinations of wind, water, earth, and fire. And unlike the rather limited combinations in Wild Arms (the game that Quest most strongly resembles), players can combine more than two elements at a time to come up with potentially devastating spells.

While Quest 64 doesn't have the glitz of a Final Fantasy VII or the detail of a Sakoden, it should be, pure and simple, a fun, traditional RPG for N64. And though the wait for Mother 3 and Zelda 64 seems interminable, THQ should succeed the way Sony did with Wild Arms — in providing a great game to tide players over until the big one hits.

ng



Players will have to perform all manner of maneuvers to proceed



Quest 64's environments are always appropriately bright and verdant



TANARUS™

The planet you wish you never heard of
and launches its attack on Windows®

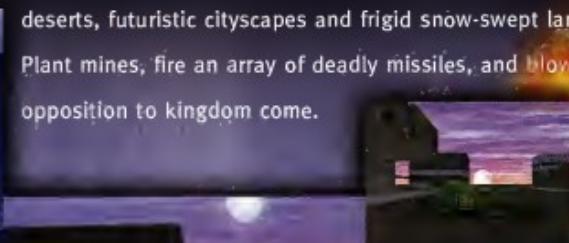


TANARUS sets a new standard in multiplayer action-strategy

gaming — delivering futuristic tank warfare either online or on disc. Pick your team, load up your tank, and let it roll. Experience killer graphics as you navigate through sun-baked

deserts, futuristic cityscapes and frigid snow-swept lands.

Plant mines, fire an array of deadly missiles, and blow the opposition to kingdom come.



Sony Interactive Studios America

Tanarus™ © 2004 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. GigaJolt Studio Publishing.
Entertainment America Inc. Windows® is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation.



has just declared war on the internet,
95 this fall.



TANK WARFARE AVAILABLE IN STORES FOR WINDOWS® 95 FALL 1997

EXPLOSIVE ACTION BEGINS NOW AT <http://www.tanarus.com>

MULTIPLAYER GAMING ONLINE

No AI online — every tank commander is very real — or practice solo with Windows® 95 version.

ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS

Chat with tank teammates, or psych-out the opposition on an open line.

FULL CUSTOMIZATION

Customize controls and peripherals, then choose from 5 different tanks with more than 30 different weapons modules.

POUNDING EFFECTS

Feel the effects that day and night cycles, and weather have on your tank drive.

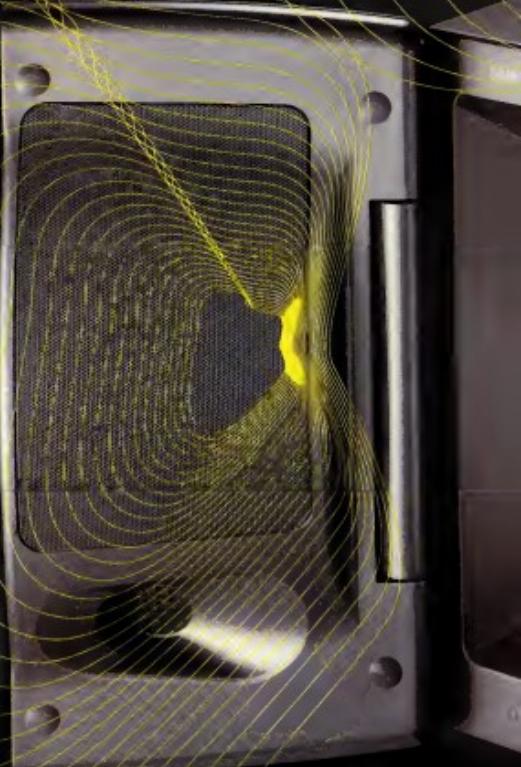
SAMSUNG

GXTV

hyper amplified sound stereo surround sound
built-in 15 watt sub-woofer
precision-adjustable stereo speaker doors
video game sound presets

hyper amplified graphics graphic enhancement circuitry
low-emission, image burn-in resistant screen
13" color TV with 1:1-channel tuning

extreme power works with all video game systems
multiple game system hook-ups
tilt/swivel stand
stereo headphone jack
backlit remote control



21 watts

of gaming sound power

aimed right at your eardrums

now

\$199*

after \$30 mail-in rebate

play it
wide open



personal video game tv

Sampling GXTV available at these fine national retailers:



For more information on the GXTV (model GXT1399), call 1-800-SO-SMP or visit <http://gxtv.somapple.com>.
Estimated selling price is \$229 before \$30 mail-in rebate. Actual selling price may vary.
Offer valid on purchases made Oct. 1, 1987 and Jan. 15, 1988.

Prepare to meet thy maker.



When you're ready for skull-crushing, hard-hitting, tournament style action ... you're ready for Drachen Zor.TM Not just another fighting game, Drachen Zor takes you on a no-holds-barred battle through the nine blood pits of Drakkor — a mystical fantasy world where 16 high-definition, fully-mobile, 3D warriors all fight to become Warlord of the Dragon Gate.

Fight one character at a time, or up to three others with its multiplayer networking mode — either way, you'll encounter combatants of all shapes and sizes attacking from all angles. And with more than 54,000 different playing combinations, you could play this game forever.

Assuming you don't meet thy maker first.



Drachen ZorTM



SOUTHPEAKTM
INTERACTIVE

www.southpeak.com

Developed by:



35% off

Drachen Zor, SouthPeak and the SouthPeak logo are trademarks of SouthPeak Interactive, LLC. Call 1-800-211-3277 for more dealer information.



Panzer Dragoon Saga



Sega takes the best elements from the fascinating *Panzer Dragoon* universe and ties them into a cohesive storyline as featured in the game's comprehensive opening FMV sequence.

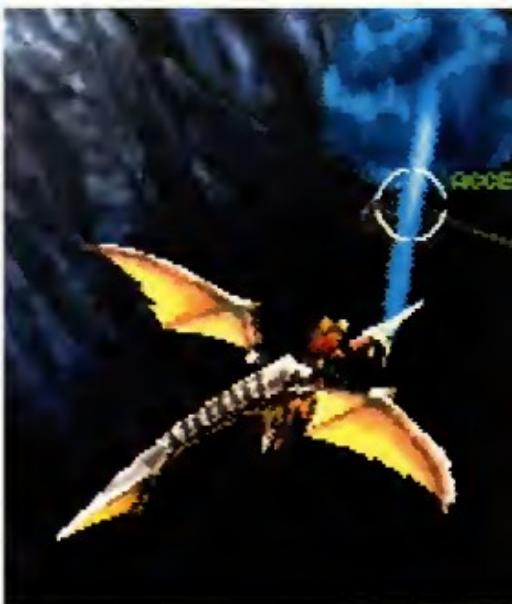
Despite Saturn's struggle to hold on to a significant share of the console market, the 32-bit machine can still lay claim to some of the industry's most memorable games. Indeed, back in 1995, one of the first titles from its limited early catalog to truly impress western gamers was *Panzer Dragoon*, and this at a time when Sega's machine was still only available as a Japanese import. Although hardly a revolution in terms of gameplay, it nevertheless represented the kind of flair and excellence in videogame design the Japanese seem able to achieve at will.

Its sequel, *Panzer Dragoon 2*, took the 3D environment one step further, providing as engrossing and polished an experience as its predecessor, albeit in a rather short-lived form. The in-game graphics were not the only visual aspect of the game that retained the quality of the original—the prerendered sequences were also just as stylishly choreographed and exuded the same cinematic feel, for which it deservedly received much acclaim.

When news first broke of this latest installment in the series, *Next Generation* was not surprised to learn it

Sega tries to deliver its coup de grace with *Panzer Dragoon Saga*, combining fantastic visuals and up to four CDs' worth of gameplay

Format:	Saturn
Publisher:	Sega
Developer:	Team Andromeda
Release Date:	Fall 1997
Origin:	Japan



would be an RPG, not a shooter. But, if ever there was a series whose accomplished mélange of fantastic settings and characters was perfectly suited for an extended adventure-based quest, *Panzer Dragoon* is it.

Not surprisingly, the game takes



Panzer Dragoon Saga will feature the same quality of graphics and range of weapons that have made the series world renowned.



Penzer Dragoon Sage continues the series' tradition of great graphics and typically smooth animation

place in the same environment as its previous incarnations. Although prosperous thousands of years ago, the world is now on the brink of extinction. The use of biotechnology and genetic engineering in an attempt to clone the world's first inhabitants resulted in hideous and aggressive monsters. Over time, the world has deteriorated to the point where its current inhabitants have lost the power they held in the "Old Century" and are forced to live in permanent fear of the savage nature of their ancestors' creations.

In an attempt to get the world back on its feet, one country, known as The Empire, explored the ruins of Old Century cities and military installations, acquiring a multitude of weapons and other similarly useful items, eventually finding an all-important, powerful class of items called "relics." However, corrupted by its

newly found power, The Empire does not salvage the world but instead brings a legacy of war that claims thousands of lives. Out of the ruins of The Empire's tyranny, several groups of scavengers and hunters have survived by populating the wastelands.

The game begins in one such city of ruins, guarded by a group of former hunters turned mercenaries. The youngest member of the crew is Edge, the game's central character. A recently discovered relic is found buried among the ruins, but proves to be too valuable an item, and an unprovoked attack by an

Edge is saved by a dragon, who shows him a vision

aerial fleet intent on gaining the relic for themselves soon follows, killing every hunter except the game's hero. Left for dead, Edge is saved by a dragon, who shows him a vision of another, yet-to-be-discovered, strangely shaped relic, and the two depart on a quest to find it, as well as avenge the deaths of his friends.

In typical RPG fashion, information will need to be extracted from various characters Edge meets on his travels. This happens chiefly in the game's villages, where valuable objects can also be found. The exploration-driven nature of the game has made it necessary to abandon the on-rails approach of the prequels. As a result, Edge is free to roam his 3D surroundings, either in



ng alphas



The dragon accompanies the game's hero Edge on his quest to find a relic and avenge his friends' deaths. Throughout the game, players can raise their dragon's flying or combat abilities by training it well.



towns or as he takes to the skies on the back of his flying companion.

The game's combat sections take place in the field stages and are viewed from a top-down perspective. Sega has adopted a traditional turn-based system, with the usual experience and hit points, which contrasts starkly with the all-out action of the previous *Panzer* titles.

Alert players can breed their dragon to perform better

Edge's enemies mostly take the form of the descendants of the world's fearsome genetic mutations created in the now distant past.

Due to the game's character duo, the control system is a complex yet logical affair, providing a variety of options whether in exploring or attacking mode. Interaction between the game's characters and objects is made easier with Sage's Lock-on Communication System, which will automatically target a

neighboring person or item.

The battle graphics are all presented in real time, with the game's Active Chase System adding a strategy element by highlighting danger areas and allowing players to change their position accordingly before the enemy's next series of attacks.

Interestingly, as the game progresses, Edge's dragon companion evolves through one of several developmental paths determined by the player's actions. By strengthening and restoring its shell, the winged organism can evolve into a new form, and this evolution has a significant effect on gameplay. Depending on how it's raised, the creature's combat and flying ability, together with other essential skills will be affected, so alert players can breed their dragon to perform better in certain situations and suit their individual preferences.

Team Andromeda, the group behind the first two titles of the series, is creating a fantastic-looking RPG. *Saga* continues the graphic splendor and wonderfully smooth animation the series has become known for despite the increase in detail, especially during the town and village sections.

Panzer Dragoon Saga is currently planned for a fall release in Japan, possibly on as many as four CDs, and although it's difficult to predict how such a title will be received in the West, an American version is in the cards. However, translation of the game's 1,500 pages of text will doubtless slow the process down somewhat, so for now, U.S. gamers can only look at the pictures, hope, and wait.



The dragon will evolve differently, taking on alternative characteristics depending on how players treat the creature.



The game will use the previous games' targeting system by automatically selecting a weak area of an opponent or item

ng

RAYSTORM™

WIN
\$10,000

CONTEST DETAILS
INSIDE PACKAGE



Eye-Popping Hyper-3D!
Two Player Simultaneous Action!
Arcade Perfect!



CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB



Twitch Games
Nothing Else!



PlayStation and the PlayStation logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "RAYSTORM" is a trademark of Taito Corp., licensed by Working Designs. Ctron Games © Taito Corp. 1996. Engage Translations © Working Designs 1997. "Working Designs" is a registered trademark of Working Designs, Inc. All rights reserved. "SPAZ" is a trademark of Working Designs, Inc. All rights reserved. Ctron Games © Taito Corp. 1996. Engage Translations © Working Designs 1997. "Working Designs" is a registered trademark of Working Designs, Inc. All rights reserved. "SPAZ" is a trademark of Working Designs, Inc. All rights reserved. Ctron Games © Taito Corp. 1996. Engage Translations © Working Designs 1997. "Working Designs" is a registered trademark of Working Designs, Inc. All rights reserved. "SPAZ" is a trademark of Working Designs, Inc. All rights reserved.

WORKING DESIGNS

Microsoft

Where do you want to go today?™

Follow
in the
footsteps
of history.



© 1997 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, where do you want to go today?, Windows and the Windows logo are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. Mac and the DE logo are trademarks of Apple.

Getting yourself your men surrounded
is very bad for morale.



Mortar or flamethrowers...



Nothing cleans out a town quite



To do in Holland:



Small trips, admire windmills,
small villages, buy bread.

Unless
of course
you want
to win.



"Look ol' boy, ignore everything
I say and you'll do smashing."



You took the bridge yesterday. That



Attack at every house, house, house

Cut up in an empty blast crater.



Too tired to march?

CLOSECOMBAT A BRIDGE TOO FAR

Operation Market Garden was Field Marshal Montgomery's brilliant über-plan to send the Nazis scampering back to Berlin once and for all. And even though it began with the largest airdrop in military history, it ended up a complete and bloody failure. Maybe you can do better. With the right amount of strategic brilliance you can take the fifth and final bridge that Monty so unfortunately missed. It's simple. Recreate history and you will fail. Rewrite it and well, anything's possible. www.microsoft.com/games/closecombat

**"GOES 0 TO 60
IN 4.5 SECONDS."**

DEPENDING ON YOUR ARM."

Ben "Smasher" Jackson





EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

You've been warned.

CORE

SAVE THE GAS MONEY.

THIS BABY RUNS ON ADRENALINE. YOUR ADRENALINE.



BECAUSE POST-MILLENNIUM MAYHEM HAS STRUCK.

AND IT'S GONNA TAKE MORE THAN A SEMI-AUTOMATIC
TO SURVIVE THESE 3D MEAN STREETS, SUBWAYS AND
SCUM-FILLED CITY PARKS.

WHERE FIGHTING THE CROWDS HAS A
SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT MEANING.

JUST KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED,
BECAUSE ONE GOOD THROW AND
YOU'RE OUT. COLD.



FIGHTING FORCE

www.fightingforce.com



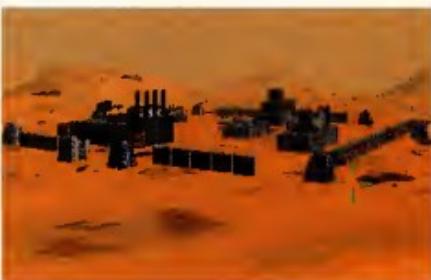


10Six



Conversing with another avatar inside a 10^{SDX} camp (above). A first-person view (right) of a typical camp as seen from its perimeter

SegaSoft has built an environment for one million users. But will gamers come?



Think a game can combine the real-time strategy and overhead perspective of Command & Conquer with the action and first-person perspective of Quake? SegaSoft does, and combining those gameplay elements are the least of 10^{SDX}'s design challenges — not only will the game be played on the

Players receive one of the planetoid's million mining plots

world's shakiest game platform, the Internet, support up to one million players, and require the maintenance necessary to keep a persistent world operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week, but it is also the first game to make use of the company's new Transactor technology. Revealed in NG 32, Transactor enables the game designers to add new objects to online games, and lets players take actual ownership of these objects.

To grasp the ambitious concept of 10^{SDX}, players must first understand how a realm of one million gamers came to exist simultaneously. Taking place in the future, a rogue planetoid loaded with a valuable energy resource called transium has settled into the sun's orbit. The world government has contracted four major

Format:	Online/PC
Publisher:	SegaSoft
Developer:	PostLinear
Release Date:	Q1 1998
Origin:	U.S.

corporations to mine the transium. Under a contractual agreement to mine transium for one of those corporations, players receive one of the planetoid's one million mining plots to call their own.

With this type of off-world, Wild West mining environment, the intense



Ominous buildings offset strange terrain (above). Transium mining (top)



In battle players can select vehicles and direct them in attack. Here, a tank destroys the wall surrounding a transium well



Two of the four logos for the parent corporations responsible for *10^{2X}* mining operations. ToyCo boasts some surrealistic defense devices

gameplay comes in the form of defending one's own camp and raiding others' camps. When players defend their base, they can command their defenses from an overhead view. When raiding, which can be done in a group of up to six players, each invader is limited to a first-person view.

It's not all fighting, though. According to Executive Producer Larry Pacey, mining plays an important part in the game. "The same mining mechanic was within *M.U.L.E.*," says Pacey, referring to the classic title by EA, which inspired much of *10^{2X}*'s design. "There was a resource and if you failed to mine enough of it, there would be no more mules available. It's the same type of cyclical situation here. There's a co-dependency of technologies and research."

As sure as resource management plays a role in camp development, so does the player's need to utilize the online community. "We've kind of coined the phrase that *10^{2X}* is a community based on paranoia," Pacey chuckles. "There's constant paranoia that your base is going to be under attack. So you've got to find friends." Beyond standard protection issues, the team feels



A raiding party of up to six players can beam into a base at one time. To maintain balance, the game enables six allies to offer support.

compelled to make sure players meet and work with each other in a number of ways. "You can't do it all," says Pacey. "You can't mine, refine, and manufacture rovers, weapons, buildings, and structures. And your plot of land might not have a good amount of transium."

Pacey's Nexus group appears to have a well-thought-out answer to every



Unlike multiplayer Quake, weapons in *10^{2X}* are visibly distinguishable. With the support of Transactor, players maintain physical ownership of individual weapons.



design and balance issue that could plague this large persistent world. "We've designed the game," says Pacey, "so that when you start you have a two-week 'corporate protection' period. And that's where you have these big-ass droids that are indestructible. They're like super droids that will demolish anyone who comes to your camp. You can also lease

"The technology is going to be there to support a million people"

Larry Pacey, producer

these rovers for extended periods from your parent corporation, like if you're on a vacation in the real world."

Pacey believes the average player will need to be online once every couple of days to tend to the camp. And while **Next Generation** was quick to point out that there are potentially plenty of problems that may occur when players do not tend to their plot of land, Pacey was quick to explain the positives. "For the first time," he beams, "there's this alternate reality that is maturing and doing things when you're not there.



ToyCo defense vehicles (top) are characteristically bizarre, with a hood-mounted gun and a wind-up key



A map of the planetoid provides the background for a chat session (top). An armed avatar (above) glides through camp on a hoverboard

Your camp is continuing to mine its resource, refine it."

So how will **10^{9X}** work? "We currently have 33 host servers across the country that can run spawned worldlets of **10^{9X}** at the same time," says an enthusiastic Pacey, "so people based in any region are going to get the best gameplay. The reason is that we have a UNIX SUN system backbone. We're not using NTs; we're using mission critical SPARC IIs to handle the games. We have a lot of CPU power, and a lot of RAM."

When **10^{9X}** ships, there won't be enough online players in the U.S. with the required hardware to fill every plot on **10^{9X}**, and Pacey admits this. "The resources and the technology are going to be there to support a million people," Pacey says. "The game is still going to be fun with the tens or hundreds of thousands of people that take part in it."

Associate Producer Phil Gelber concludes, "There's no real winning or ending of **10^{9X}**." That community has been one of the reasons behind the popularity of text-based MUDs, and if SegaSoft can channel it to a commercial project, it may find that before long, the world of **10^{9X}** will start to fill up.

MICROPROSE.

www.microprose.com



www.worms2.com

Dear Mrs. Worm,
We regret to inform you
that your son has died in
battle. Although he was

KILLCRAZED
and bent on
destruction,

this should not diminish the bravery
of his kamikaze attack on a platoon of
hostile worms. Our country owes him
much. His death will not be in vain.



WORMS²
The cult classic is back!

Available on Windows® 95 CD-ROM

Visit your local retailer or call 24 hours:

1-800-695-GAME (U.S. and Canada)



©1997 MicroProse, Inc. All rights reserved. Worms2 and Team17 are trademarks of Team17 Software Ltd. MicroProse is a registered trademark of MicroProse Software, Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective holders. Call 1-800-775-3772 for information on Game Ratings.



M

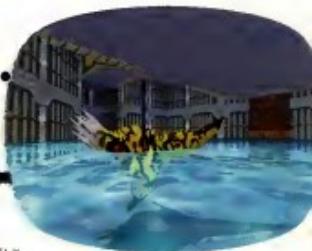
VALVE

SIERRA®

S T E R N U M .



S H E ' S S M A R T,
H A S A G R E A T P E R S O N A L I T Y ,
A N D K N O W S T H A T T H E W A Y T O A
M A N ' S H E A R T
I S T H R O U G H H I S
S T E R N U M .



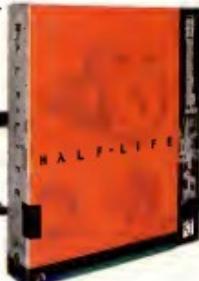
SHE'S A TRAINED
GOVERNMENT ASSASSIN
WHOSE ONLY GOAL IS TO
SILENCE YOU—PERMANENTLY.
AND YOU'RE RUNNING OUT OF PLACES TO HIDE.

THINK THE ONLY OPPONENTS WORTH FIGHTING ARE
THOSE YOU MEET IN A DEATHMATCH? THINK AGAIN.
WITH HALF-LIFE'S ADVANCED CHARACTER AI, YOU'LL
BATTLE ENEMIES SO SMART, YOU'LL SWEAT THEY'RE
ALIVE. THEY'LL TAKE COVER, RECRUIT OTHERS AND
WORK TOGETHER TO BRING YOU DOWN.

AND THE REALISM DOESN'T STOP THERE. THINGS ACT,
LOOK AND SOUND LIKE THEY DO IN THE REAL WORLD.
WE COULD FILL YOUR HEAD WITH TERMS LIKE 16-BIT
COLOR, FULL-SPECTRUM LIGHTING, DSP SOUND, AND
SKELETAL ANIMATION. WHAT IT ALL MEANS TO YOU IS A
GAME SO REAL, SO UNPREDICTABLE, SO ALIVE, YOU'LL
SWEAT IT HAS A PULSE. ADD A 3D CARD AND YOUR OWN
PULSE WILL RACE. CREATE CUSTOM LEVELS WITH WORLDCAST
2.0 (INCLUDED). OF COURSE THERE ARE MULTIPLAYER
OPTIONS—FOR UP TO 32 PLAYERS. BUT HOW MANY OF YOUR
FRIENDS ARE AS BEAUTIFUL AS SHE IS, OR AS DEADLY?

PLAY THE DEMO @ www.sierra.com/half-life

H A L F - L I F E



Shadow Master



nifty explosions and realtime lighting effects highlight the game

Hammerhead was formed a short while ago by Chris Stanforth, formerly of Traveller's Tales, known for side-scrolling platform games like *Mickey Mania* and *Toy Story*. The split, which was reportedly amicable, was based on Stanforth's desire to do something other than a 2D game, and the company's first effort, *Shadow Master*, is a good start.

At its heart, *Shadow Master* is a first-person shooter, in which the player pilots a kind of jet-powered RV — it provides a perfect example of what a developer can do when it breaks away from standard PlayStation library titles. With production design partly by fantasy illustrator and album cover veteran Rodney Matthews, whose work can be seen adorning records by Asia and The Scorpions, among others, *Shadow Master* is, if nothing else, a very pretty game indeed.

The game boasts a large number of impressive realtime lighting effects and explosions, and its occasional open area arenas provide an excellent sense of space. Above all, it remains faithful to its

Start-up developer Hammerhead shows what can be done on PlayStation when you ignore Sony

Format:	PlayStation
Publisher:	Psygnosis
Developer:	Hammerhead
Release Date:	Q1 1998
Origin:	U.K.



With production design done in part by illustrator and album cover veteran Rodney Matthews, *Shadow Master* looks quite good

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

WINONA RYDER

20TH CENTURY FOX

GRAND PRIX

SIGOURNEY WEAVER WINONA RYDER ALIEN RESURRECTION

ROBERT DUVALL MATT DAMON

FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA MICHAEL MANDO

CHRISTIAN SLATER JEREMY IRONS

ROBERT CARROLL DAVID GIL

WALTER MILLER BILL BALOGH

ALICIA SILVEIRA TOM WOODCOCK JR.

HELEN SHACHEYER NICK PHELPS

JORDAN HORWITZ

AIR

ALICE GILLIS

TONI WOODCOCK JR.

HELEN SHACHEYER

NICK PHELPS

JORDAN HORWITZ

ROBERT CARROLL DAVID GIL

WALTER MILLER BILL BALOGH

ROBERT DUVALL MICHAEL MANDO

CHRISTIAN SLATER JEREMY IRONS

FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA MICHAEL MANDO

ROBERT CARROLL DAVID GIL

WALTER MILLER BILL BALOGH



Some enemies are, of course, bigger and more dangerous than others

premise by maintaining a high rate of speed, a good frame rate, and generally a quicker pace than *Psygnosis'* recent, somewhat leaden corridor-shooter (and **NG** cover story, ahem), *Codename Tonka*.

Judging by the beta disc recently given a hands-on trial by **Next Generation** staffers, however, it's unclear whether *Shadow Master* can escape the "push the button, open the door" formula so common in first-person shooters. Also despite the game's overall speed, the player-controlled vehicle had a nasty habit of grinding to a halt on contact with any of the outdoor areas' sloping walls. However, the game is still quite early in its development cycle, and there remains ample time for these problems to be addressed.

As PlayStation's game library begins to move into its third generation, titles like *Shadow Master* continue to show that programmers and developers who attempt to get as "close to the metal" as possible can always wring out new tricks.

The proof, as always, is in the playing, but as the first effort from a developer new to the system, it certainly looks promising.



It remains to be seen, however, whether *Shadow Master* can escape the "shoot everything that moves" tedium of many first-person games





3Dfx
interactive

Copyright © 1997 3Dfx Interactive, Inc. The 3Dfx interactive logo and Voodoo Graphics and Knockin' Pearl are trademarks or service marks of 3Dfx Interactive, Inc. Images courtesy of Electronic Arts, Jam 'n' Gorilla Simulations, Bungie Software, 3D Interactive and Crystal Dynamics. Information Group, Ltd. OFFICE is a trademark of Electronic Arts company. FIFA World Cup™ World Cup 98 images are trademarks of Electronic Arts. © 1997 Electronic Arts. PBA Official licensed product of the FIFA World Cup France 98. © 1997 The France 98 Organizing Committee. The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company (in Canada, Goodyear Canada, Inc.) Used with permission. PG is a registered trademark of Royal Crown Cola Company, Inc. Special thanks to Gold Coast Motor Events Co. for providing materials for use in Andretti Racing. Crystal Dynamics © 1997 Crystal Dynamics.



Get Voodoo.

Myth Images are trademarks of Europa Software © 1997 Europa Software. Langbow 2 and Wing Commander Prophecy images are trademarks of ORIGIN Systems, Inc. and Electronic Arts. © 1997 ORIGIN Systems, Inc. Jane's is a registered trademark of Jane's Specialized Computer Graphics and Trademarks of IHS. Nuclear Strike images are trademarks of Electronic Arts © 1997 Electronic Arts. Androm Racing images are trademarks of Electronic Arts © 1997 Electronic Arts. Ghostrider (winged foot design) are trademarks of Special thanks to all of the sponsors of Androm Racing. All sponsored products and company names are the property of their respective owners. Super Radar images are trademarks of GT Interactive. Pandamonium 2 images are trademarks of

BEAUTY VS BEAST

Supercars battle the power

Modern supercars:
Jaguar XJ 220™
Dodge® Viper GTS
TVR® Cerbera™
Chevrolet® Corvette®
Nissan 300ZX®

Power of the past:
Shelby Cobra™ 427
'69 Chevrolet® Corvette® 427
'70 Chevrolet® Chevelle® SS 454
'69 Chevrolet® Camaro® ZL1
'71 Plymouth® Hemi Cuda

True Driving Physics let you really feel what it's like to be behind the wheel of a '09 Hemi Cuda or Jaguar XJ220! Take it an

"Test Drive 4's exquisite graphics make it an instant contender in the crowded racing genre... visually stunning and entertaining racing game"

-Ultra Game Players

More ways to race! Challenge the world in Single Race, Ghost Car Mode, World Circuit, Masters Cup and a variety of multi-player tournaments.

"...the best racing game coming to PlayStation
this holiday season... the tracks look great,
the car models are the best we've ever seen,
gameplay and control are peerless"

-PSXtreme

Take On The Hazards Of The Road:
Multiple car police chases, on-coming
traffic, cross traffic, and more!

"...one smokin' racing game"
-GamePro

"Test Drive 4 is the clear choice for
BEST RACING GAME OF 1997!"
Official E3 Best Of Show Awards



Hot Soundtrack
Featuring The Music Of
Orbital
The Younger, Younger 28's

TEST DRIVE 4



Download the demo today
at www.accolade.com

TO ORDER DIRECT CALL 1.800.245.7744

ACCOLADE



Available November '97 For Sony PlayStation and PC CD-ROM!



WHERE THE CYBERDIVERSION INSTITUTE STANDS ON THE HEAT.NET 5-POINT PLAN.

On August 17, 1997, several members of the CyberDiversion Institute logged on to HEAT.NET. Here's what they found:

(RATINGS ARE FROM 1 TO 5 DOVES, 5 DOVES BEING EXCEPTIONAL.)



POINT #1: Making Internet Gaming Easy.

After trying every internet game network, we found HEAT.NET had the easiest start-up: Log on to HEAT.NET, get the free HEAT software and play free, OR purchase the retail box (includes six months' premium membership, HEAT CD with games and internet access from MCI). HEAT.NET's simplified start-up process will jump-start world peace by allowing people to start diverting their aggressive urges away from reality immediately!



POINT #2: Creating The Fastest Internet Gaming Experience.

We found that HEAT.NET delivers the fastest, smoothest gameplay on the net. With the new millennium and the threat of Armageddon looming, the faster every human can purge their evil Reptilian Complex buildup, the better for all of us!



POINT #3: Making HEAT.NET Compatible With Nearly Every Multi-Player PC Game.

Nearly every aggression-intensive game out there can be played on HEAT.NET! We played some of our favorites, like Quake, WarCraft II, and Scud: Industrial Evolution™ as well as games designed exclusively for HEAT, like DeathDrome, Alien Race™ and Net Fighter™ plus some intense HEAT-only Quake Mods. This wide range of Reptilian Complex outlets puts the power of peace into the hands of the masses!



POINT #4: Rewarding Cyber-Aggression With Points And Prizes.

We found that HEAT is the ONLY internet game network where aggression is rewarded with frequent player points (they call Degrees) that can be redeemed for prizes. What an idea! If people play more often, they will quell aggressive urges more often and decrease real-life aggression more often. We believe HEAT.NET should win the Nobel Peace Prize for this point alone!



POINT #5: Creating Competition With Ladders And Events.

The ability to compete against the best players for prizes in automated, secure events and rise to the top creates an environment for Optimum Diversion Release (ODR), or the release of the most aggressive Reptilian urges, and the attainment of individual peace—which we believe will lead to a greater world peace!

Therefore, we, the CyberDiversion Institute, endorse HEAT.NET for its outstanding contribution in making the world safer for everyone. Please log on to HEAT.NET today and do your part for world peace!

Officially endorsed by Dr. D.G. Bartha
The CyberDiversion Institute

Joint Strike Fighter

Format:	PC
Publisher:	Eidos
Developer:	Innerloop
Release Date:	TBA
Origin:	Norway

A breathtaking new terrain engine makes the first *Joint Strike Fighter* game a force to be reckoned with



The aircraft are virtually indistinguishable from the real X-32 and X-35

Flight simulators have, admittedly, not taken any huge leaps forward since the early 1990s, with the release of Falcon 3.0 and several other amazing (at the time) games. Improvements to the genre have been mostly cosmetic since then, with the majority of enhancements falling into two categories of detail: terrain and aircraft.

While there are plenty of flight sims in development in which the aircraft is virtually indistinguishable from the genuine article, Innerloop's terrain technology (originally covered in *NG 29*) makes the company's entry into the market more than noteworthy. *JSF* is the first game to use the Norwegian company's Iterated Functions Systems (IFS) technology, which produces a level of detail and realism unparalleled in the flight simulation game. The 10 million square miles of terrain in the game are covered with hills, trees, or ocean, all of which appear as far as the horizon.

The game itself is standard flight sim fare — there are four campaigns, each with several flight groups, ground targets,



What would pass for rendered cut scenes a few years ago are now standard gameplay graphics — thanks to companies like Innerloop

and air targets. Players can elect to fly either of the two jointly developed prototype fighters for which the game was named: Boeing's X-32 and Lockheed Martin's X-35. *JSF* is the first game to feature these two craft, along with the latest in military munitions, such as Lockheed Martin's own Wind Corrected Munition Dispenser.

With the sheer number of upcoming flight sims, and the intimidating shadow of Falcon 4.0 on the horizon, it will be difficult for any one title to distinguish itself. But if there's any one game that has the potential, *Joint Strike Fighter* is it.

ng



Since the terrain is visible all the way to the horizon, players will have no trouble distinguishing potential enemies in the distance





The Sony Computer Entertainment logo is a trademark of Sony Corporation. PlayStation and the PlayStation logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. NHL is a registered trademark and FaceOff is a trademark of the National Hockey League. All NHL logos, marks and NHL Team Logos are trademarks and service marks of the National Hockey League or NHLPA. National Hockey Players Association. NHLPA and the NHLPA logo are trademarks of the NHLPA and are used under license by Sony Computer Entertainment America, Inc. Officially Licensed Product of the National Hockey Players Association. Designed and developed by Valve Games ©1997 Sony Computer Entertainment America, Inc. The rating icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Content Association. www.giagames.com



G

IVEN THE AMOUNT OF EFFORT IT
TAKES TO SCORE, IT SEEMS ONLY FITTING
THAT IT'S CALLED A GOAL.



NHL *FACEOFF* 98

PROPERTY OF PLAYSTATION
ATHLETIC DEPT.



DEFEAT, HUMILIATION,



PlayStation

Coming
October '97

Visit our WEBSITE www.interplay.com

PAIN.



TRAVEL a Race circuit that spans 5 Worlds. (24 TRACKS!!), and the ULTIMATE showdown in the ARENA of DEATH!



RAGE on the asphalt in 8 CUSTOMIZABLE machines of war.



ERADICATE your opponents with NAPALM LIQUID DEATH, ANTI-MATTER Projectiles, Nuclear PLASMA Cannons, "WRATH of God" Death Beams, and much, much MORE!



CHOOSE your Fate. 8 unique characters with UPGRADEABLE Abilities, and each with a DESTINY of their OWN.



16+ TO ADULTS
K-A
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB



Interplay
INTERPLAY.COM
THE GAMERS™

ASPHALT

RACING WITH A VENGEANCE

©1997 Interplay Productions. All rights reserved. Red Asphalt and Interplay are trademarks of Interplay Productions. All rights reserved. PlayStation and the PlayStation logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment America. All rights reserved. All other copyrights and trademarks are property of their respective owners.

Respect Inc.



Welcome to Elmer City, where the key to being a successful gangster is having the right suit — end hat, end tie, end cuff links ...

Psygnosis continues to develop its stable of unique games with a title featuring the original gangsters



Since the release of Wipeout almost three years ago, Psygnosis has continuously been a source of delight and surprise, and its latest, Respect Inc., from U.K. developer Pure Entertainment, is no exception. Rather than fold yet another futuristic science fiction game on the gaming public, Pure has based its "wacky" action/strategy title in a very different period: the Prohibition era, gangster heyday of the 1920s.

The game begins with the player's character fleeing his native Sicily and landing in Elmer City, Pure's take on the Al Capone-run Chicago. From there, players build their Mafia empire from scratch, muscling in on the territory of a mob boss named Spatz. The action unfolds in realms 3D, seen from an isometric perspective, and the game follows a vaguely mission-based structure in which players pull off increasingly ambitious "jobs" in each successive level.

Since the game is thoroughly steeped in its own peculiar version of '20s mob culture, this is accomplished by earning and building up "respect," represented in a strangely concrete and literal way within the game by "respect points" and a "respect meter." In an odd touch, the amount of respect a player can earn is directly linked to how good a suit he owns and how well-accessorized



Format:	PC, PlayStation
Publisher:	Psygnosis
Developer:	Pure Entertainment
Release Date:	March 1998
Origin:	U.K.

he is. The better the player's suit, including hat, tie, and even cuff links, the more respect it can hold — sort of the mob equivalent of a gas tank. This makes finding a good tailor and keeping him safe, an integral part of the strategy. Hm ...

In traditional gangland style, players then earn respect by recruiting additional members and squeezing local businesses for a piece of the action to generate cash, both of which are accomplished by using the "intimidate" button. Intimidated businesses are noted on the map by a change of color, and rival gangs can, in



An early sample of the city's architecture, rendered in high res

turn, come in and take them over again, which will then require the player to re-inimidate them.

The types of personnel a player can recruit include tailors, of course, but also accountants for gathering up money, safecrackers for breaking into banks, drive-by shooters, and hit men. In addition to these specialists, players also have to recruit more general goons for extra muscle during a job, and to watch over and guard their territory.

None of this action takes place in a lawless vacuum. The police are everywhere, and are very tough cops indeed, but can be safely bribed — one at a time — to leave the player's mob alone, albeit briefly. In time, however, the player will oversee liquor rackets during Prohibition, steal the Mona Lisa, and even attempt an escape from Alcatraz after being locked up for tax evasion.

For authentic '20s atmosphere (or at



Rob a few banks, squeeze a few local businesses, take on the mob. All in a day's work for the well-respected hood

least a Hollywood-style version of authentic '20s atmosphere), the soundtrack will feature a mix of jazz and ragtime, switching musical numbers to keep the appropriate mood for the action. Typical weapons from the period, including shotguns, dynamite, and the

ubiquitous Tommy gun, will also be featured, along with the humiliating and fisted Splat gun, which fires rotten fruit and takes down the rival's respect meter a peg or two in the process.

Currently in development for PC and PlayStation, the PC version will offer a two-player option, as well as 3D accelerator support. Whether the gameplay, which requires a delicate balance of action and strategy to work properly, can be as humorous and enjoyable as it sounds will have to wait for hands-on testing. *Respect Inc.*, however, certainly appears to be off to a unique start.



Characters were modeled and animated using 3D Studio MAX



FOR EXAMPLE.

BEHIND A TREE,

AND HIDE

FOR THE WOODS

LIKE HIGHTAIL IT

SWORD FIGHT,

REAL SAMURAI

YOU'D DO IN A

ALL THE THINGS

NOW YOU CAN DO



刀

BUSHIDO BLADE™

SQUARESOFT™



NEVER UNDERESTIMATE
THE POWER OF PLAYSTATION™

REAL ENOUGH FOR YOU?
NO LIFE BAR
NO TIME LIMIT
BLOODY DEATH BLOWS
MASTER SWORDPLAY
FORRESTS, TEMPLES
FIGHT IN RIVERS,



THOU SHALT NOT
KILL
THOU SHALT NOT
STEAL
THOU SHALT NOT
BURN
THOU SHALT NOT
DOVETE
THOU SHALT NOT
HURT
THOU SHALT NOT
HURT
THOU SHALT NOT
HURT

The ~~Top~~ Nine Commandments



<http://www.shiny.com>



A 3D Action Adventure Game. © 1999 Shiny Entertainment, Inc. All rights reserved. Shiny Entertainment, Shiny, Shiny 9, Shiny 9: The Nine Commandments, and the Shiny logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Shiny Entertainment, Inc. All other trademarks and registered trademarks are the property of their respective owners.



Front Mission Alternative



Detailed explosions and dramatic camera angles are just two of many factors that make *Front Mission Alternative* a game to watch

Square has wowed the world with many a game, but can it continue its streak with a revamped 16-bit Japanese title?



Missions begin almost immediately after troops are flown to the battle

Few companies can call a title that sells 530,000 copies a disappointment, but after *Front Mission*'s release in February of 1996, Square considered it just that. It was one of the last games released for Super Famicom (the last U.S. release was *Super Mario RPG*), and Square elected not to translate it for the U.S.

But now, almost two years later, videogames have become more popular

Format:	PlayStation
Publisher:	TBA
Developer:	Square
Release Date:	TBA
Origin:	Japan

than ever in the U.S. Games that would never have seen the light of day in the West are now seeing a good deal more exposure. So it comes as little surprise that Square would release updates of its most popular 16-bit titles. What is surprising, however, is that the company is releasing two updates: *Front Mission*'s true sequel, *Front Mission Second*, and a realtime version of the game, *Front Mission Alternative*. And alternative it is: The gameplay is vastly different from the 16-bit original.

FMA has, of course, received a

substantial graphics upgrade. The PlayStation's 3D powers have enabled Square to present the mechs in fully polygonal, fully texture-mapped splendor. The result: mechs that look better than any others on the system, and incredible animation and light-sourcing effects that put other mech games like *Carnage Heart* and *Virtua On* to shame. The game's look is also a great deal more mature than Square's other titles, with no anime-style, super-deformed characters or sentient animals — most of the characters in the game are humans, with an occasional robotic or cybernetic NPC.

There are many welcome features in *FMA*. Most importantly, Square has included support for the PlayStation mouse, something sorely lacking in many games that need it. *FMA* also includes the ability to save customized mechs and vehicles to memory cards. The game itself



Between missions, several rotatable views of units can aid strategy

ng alphas



The aircraft look good enough to belong in any PlayStation flight sim

is reminiscent of MechWarrior 2 in that players receive their instructions at the base camp and then customize up to three units of three mechs each to send into battle. Customization is a very detailed process: Players can add different weaponry to every limb, from guns and missiles to huge anti-tank warheads and weapons powerful enough to level an entire city. One feature not found in MechWarrior — indeed, one that mech sim fans clamored for — was the ability to customize the appearances of the players' mechs. FMA lets players do just that — in fact, it requires them to do so in some levels. Proper camouflage is necessary to avoid disaster in more than one mission.

This is not to say that avoidance is the primary tactic in FMA — far from it, in fact. While there are occasional reconnaissance missions, most levels are straightforward search-and-destroy. These missions take place in more than 30 environments, from the standard post-apocalyptic blasted lands to ports, deserts, and beaches. There are more fireights and explosions in FMA than in any game in its class. These conflicts look and sound great — the music was composed by Ryo Arai, a popular dance music producer in Japan, and the sound effects are crisp, clear, and most of all, loud. Also, when players get tired of blowing up targets, they can turn their attention to the terrain; every building and vehicle is fully destructible.

If the game can beat From's

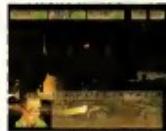


The action doesn't always take place in post-apocalyptic wastelands — conflicts in cities are quite frequent

formidable Armored Core, FMA could rule the mech genre for PlayStation. Even if it can't, the game should still be fun — and reasonably successful.

With the success of Final Fantasy VII, and the upcoming releases of Final Fantasy Tactics and Bushido Blade, Square is poised for a very profitable year. A game like Front Mission Alternative may not add a huge amount to Square's bottom line, relatively speaking, but it could be another company's flagship title. And that's not a bad spot for Square to be in, to put it mildly.

ng



But when missions do occur in barren areas, gameplay is just as intense

YOU'RE NEXT.

Colony Wars, Playgate and the Playgate logo are trademarks of Playnetics Limited. ©1997 Playnetics, Ltd. All rights reserved. The PlayStation logo and "PlayStation" are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association



★ THE LEAGUE OF FREE WORLDS NEEDS YOU. ★

COLONY WARS
EPIC SPACE CONFLICT



HEAT.NET!

THE ONLY INTERNET GAME NETWORK ENDORSED BY THE CYBERDIVERSION INSTITUTE!

WHAT THE CYBERDIVERSION INSTITUTE SAID ABOUT THE HEAT.NET 5-POINT PLAN:

POINT #1: MAKING INTERNET GAMING EASY.

What the CDI said about being able to log on to HEAT.NET, download the free HEAT software and play for free, or simply purchase the retail package (includes six months' premium membership, a HEAT

CD with games, and internet access from MCI): "**"HEAT.NET'S SIMPLIFIED START-UP PROCESS WILL JUMP-START WORLD PEACE BY ALLOWING PEOPLE TO START INVERTING THEIR AGGRESSIVE URGES AWAY FROM REALITY IMMEDIATELY!"**



AVAILABLE NOW!

POINT #2: CREATING THE FASTEST INTERNET GAMING EXPERIENCE.

What the CDI said about HEAT.NET having the smoothest, fastest internet gaming available:

"THE FASTER EVERY HUMAN CAN PURGE THEIR EVIL REPTILIAN COMPLEX BUILDUP, THE BETTER FOR ALL OF US!"

POINT #3: COMPATIBILITY WITH MOST MULTI-PLAYER CD-ROM PC GAMES.

What the CDI said about HEAT being compatible with almost every multi-player CD-ROM PC game, after playing their favorites, including Quake," WerCraft II" and Scud: Industrial Evolution," as well as HEAT-exclusives, like DeathCraft,"

Alien Race," Net Fighter" and "Intense" HEAT-only Quake Mods: "**"THIS WIDE RANGE OF REPTILIAN COMPLEX OUTLETS PUTS THE POWER OF PEACE INTO THE HANDS OF THE MASSES!"**



POINT #4: OFFERING REWARDS FOR FREQUENT PLAYERS.

What the CDI said about HEAT being the only network to award frequent player points (Degrees) that can be redeemed for prizes:

"WHAT AN IDEA IF PEOPLE PLAY MORE OFTEN, THEY WILL QUIT AGGRESSIVE URGES MORE OFTEN AND DECREASE REAL-LIFE AGGRESSION MORE OFTEN!"



POINT #5: CREATING COMPETITION WITH LADDERS AND EVENTS.

What the CDI said about HEAT's automated, secure events and the ability to rise to the top against the best competition in the world:

"[HEAT] CREATES AN ENVIRONMENT FOR...THE ATTAINMENT OF INDIVIDUAL PEACE—WHICH WE BELIEVE WILL LEAD TO A GREATER WORLD PEACE!"



LOG ON TODAY TO THE INTERNET GAME NETWORK THE CYBERDIVERSION INSTITUTE SAID "SHOULD WIN THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE!"



HEAT IS THE ANSWER!

© 1997 SpeedSoft Networks, Inc. HEAT, HEAT.NET, Net Fighter and Alien Race are trademarks of SpeedSoft Networks, Inc. DeathCraft, Industrial Evolution and its characters are © 1997 CD-Retro Software. DeathCraft is a trademark of Virtuous New Media, Inc. All other product names are the trademarks of their respective owners.



Powerslide



The cars' texture detail is already impressive and is set to improve further

Since 3Dfx Interactive gave Powerslide a prominent place in its exhibit at the last E3, Emergent's phone has been "ringing off the hook" with potential publishers eager to cut a deal, says Business Manager Greg Siegler. It's not hard to see why — Powerslide boasts a number of impressive features.

For starters, it's the only racing game to be developed for PC that will run at a consistent 60fps. In an early demo, the sensation was that of a game only a short step away from Model 2 standard, thanks to a low-level 3D engine and the assistance of the Voodoo chipset. The game has been developed from the ground up as a 3D-card-only title, with the bulk of the code written to the 3Dfx direct API Glide, and it pushes somewhere in the region of 250,000 polygons per second. (Sega's Model 2 board, by way of comparison, can handle around 300,000.) Siegler believes that with Powerslide, his team is pushing 3Dfx's card to its limits.



The varied off-road tracks put Emergent's true physics model through its paces

Emergent is working on what could be the most attractive example of a 3Dfx-based racing game yet

Format:	Arcade, N64, PC, PlayStation
Publisher:	TBA
Developer:	Emergent
Release Date:	Q1 1998
Origin:	Australia

"At 60fps, the card doesn't have a lot of pixel-processing power to spare," he says. "The real problem with the current chips is that you have to send all the position, color, and texture information for three processed vertices to the card for each triangle that's rendered. This occurs even when vertices are shared, as is usually the case. Therefore, if you have to render a lot of small triangles to the screen, the PCI bandwidth becomes a limiting factor, which is why I think we're really approaching the limits defined by the current crop of 3D cards."

As with almost all racing game developers at the moment, Emergent is concentrating most heavily on realizing a true physics model. The car dynamics in Powerslide are such that drivers can readily perform wheelies and handbrake turns; they can even drive up on two wheels to negotiate the narrow gaps and ledges of the off-road courses.

So accurate are the physics that car upgrades (purchased throughout the game with prize money) will genuinely



Powerslide offers many different surfaces on which players can race



ng alphas



Comparisons to Sega's Model 2 racer, *Sega Rally*, are not idly made. The texture quality is easily as good

alter the driving experience, from the grip of the tires to the stiffness of the suspension. All of these things then interact, on a wheel-by-wheel basis, with the track surface. As with Imagineer's Multi Racing Championship, Powerslide offers many different surfaces on which to race, and the player may encounter any number of them during one race. The result is that cars slip and skid on gravel, wet mud, and ice, and throw up great clouds of dust on the desert tracks, obscuring the view of drivers behind.

"The possibilities are only limited by the imagination of the track designers," says Siegler. "There'll be the more conventional tracks, allowing players to really get into the race craft inherent in the game, and then there'll be the extreme tracks that could open out into giant ice lakes with small, dirt-covered islands offering traction. Other tracks

might require a jump into a muddy pit, requiring a half spin in midair, or an icy aqueduct might give the players a luge-like experience."

The game is still early in its development cycle and won't see a PC release until the end of Q1 '98, with PlayStation, Nintendo 64, and com-op versions to follow later in the year.

Emergent's team is currently engaged in building ever-more-complex and realistic car models — the examples in these screenshots are only temporary, with the exception of the Volkswagen Beetle.

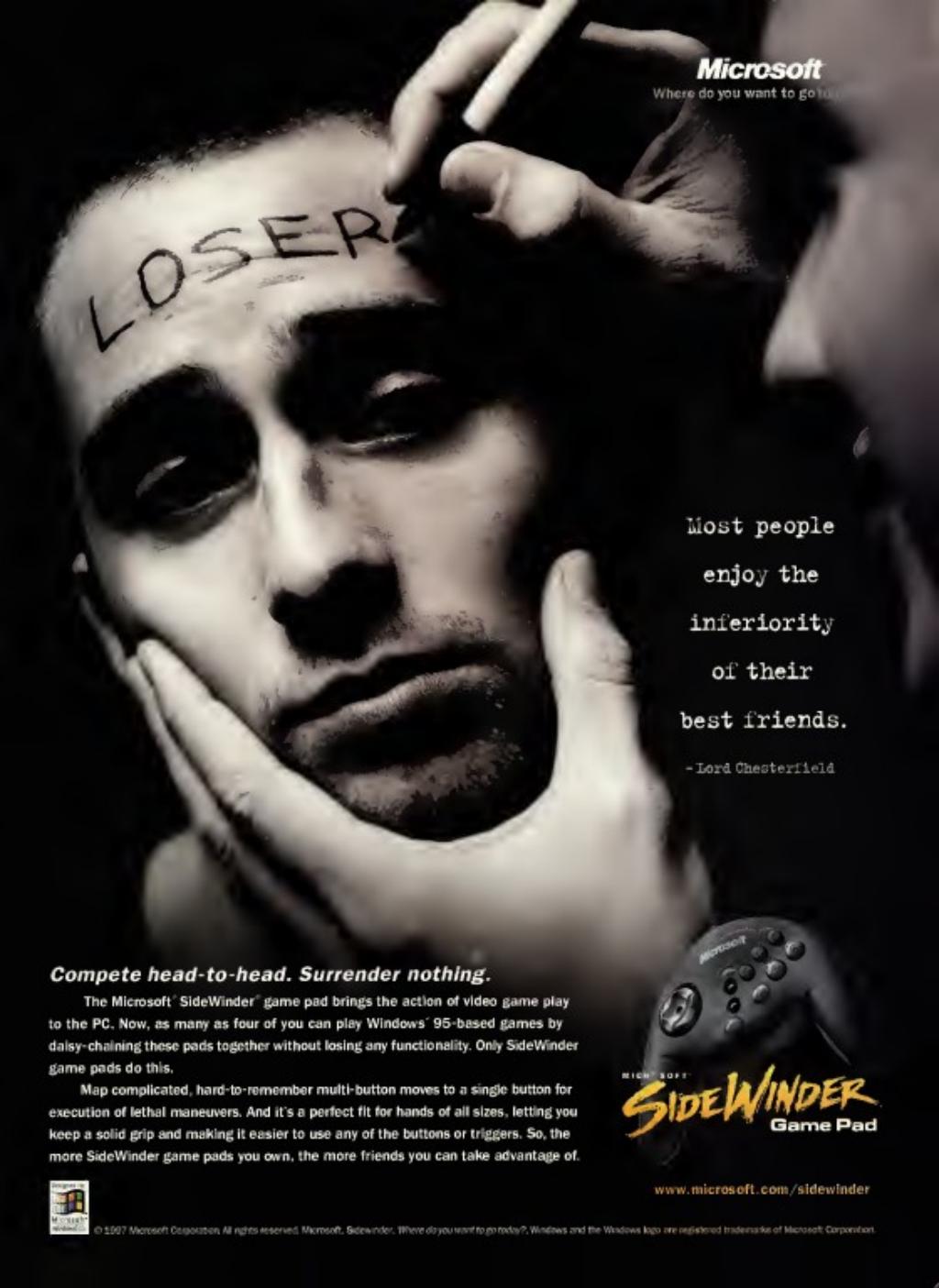
Now that the 3D engine is fully optimized (and the programmers have become better acquainted with the Voodoo card), potential Powerslide players should expect more complex models with greater texture detail in the final version.

ng



Powerslide runs at an impressive 60fps with a 3Dfx card in place. These cars are early models and will soon be replaced by more familiar rally vehicles





Microsoft

Where do you want to go today?

Most people
enjoy the
inferiority
of their
best friends.

- Lord Chesterfield

Compete head-to-head. Surrender nothing.

The Microsoft® SideWinder® game pad brings the action of video game play to the PC. Now, as many as four of you can play Windows® 95-based games by daisy-chaining these pads together without losing any functionality. Only SideWinder game pads do this.

Map complicated, hard-to-remember multi-button moves to a single button for execution of lethal maneuvers. And it's a perfect fit for hands of all sizes, letting you keep a solid grip and making it easier to use any of the buttons or triggers. So, the more SideWinder game pads you own, the more friends you can take advantage of.



www.microsoft.com/sidewinder



© 1997 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Sidewinder, Where do you want to go today?, Windows and the Windows logo are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation.

DON'T SHOOT

Actual PlayStation Screen Shots.



From 3rd person view, span the horizon for your target.



Snap into sniper mode with the flip of a button.



Start zooming in.

With hundreds of enemy alien grunts and bosses waiting in ambush, saving the earth is an almost impossible task. Fortunately the revolutionary sniper mode evens the odds. Zoom in and target your prey from over two miles away. What was once just a speck on the horizon is now an enemy close enough to see the fear in its eyes. Whether or not it deserves to keep its head is your call.

- Six new arenas designed exclusively for the Sony PlayStation™ game console.
- An arsenal of unique and twisted weapons including bombs, grenades, homing missiles, parachutes, and much more.
- 60 arenas spread out over 6 massive mining cities.
- Full 3-D environment allowing 360 degree freedom of movement.



Created by Shiny Entertainment, Inc. © 1997 Shiny Entertainment, Inc. MDK is a trademark of Shiny Entertainment, Inc. All rights reserved. PlayStation software developed by Neversoft Entertainment. Artwork and design © 1997 Playmates Interactive Entertainment Inc. SIE™ is a registered trademark of Playmates Interactive Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved. PlayStation and the PlayStation logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

...UNTIL YOU SEE THE GREENS OF THEIR EYES.



Keep going.



Ahh. Bullets or
homing grenades?



Homing grenades.



IT THINKS. THEREFORE IT KILLS.

COMING TO PLAYSTATION™ GAME CONSOLE THIS NOVEMBER.

Shiny

www.shiny.com

<http://www.playmatestoys.com>



Name:
Mia
Age:
19
Height:
5'7"
Measurements:
36-24-36
Occupation:
Rave DJ
Fighting
Technique:
Pi-Kua Kung Fu
Home Turf:
The Streets

I'll Take You Out



Lots of cool characters and environments



Endless hours of
unbelievably fast gameplay



Tons of kickin'
alternative rock tunes

K.TM

True Fighters -
True Turf

Join the Brawl in November

www.thq.com



Visit your local retailer or call
1-816-225-5187 for orders only

© 1998 THQ Inc. PlayStation and PlayStation logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved.

THQ
INC.

Seven Kingdoms

Seeing how Interactive Magic's slogan is "Strategy & Simulation," it stands to reason that the bulk of its titles would be strategy games and flight sims. I-Magic has no less than nine strategy titles in development, and differentiating between the bulk of them may be a bit difficult. However, one of them has a good chance of distinguishing itself from the pack. That title is *Seven Kingdoms*.

While many companies have successfully built on the *Command & Conquer* hype and released games that

It looks like *Warcraft*, controls like *Warcraft*, but plays like something else entirely

Format:	PC
Publisher:	Interactive Magic
Developer:	Enlight
Release Date:	December 1997
Origin:	U.S.

are similar enough to warrant a look (*Total Annihilation*, *Dark Reign*), no one has done the same with the *Warcraft* series. *Seven Kingdoms* (formerly known as *Ambition*) does, though, and with the help of a little game called *Civilization* for inspiration.

Players can choose from seven "tribes": the Chinese, Greeks, Japanese, Mayans, Normans, Persians, and Vikings. However, unlike *Civilization*, where the different cultures were only different because of their leaders' onscreen visages, *Seven Kingdoms* gives each tribe its own strengths and weaknesses. For instance, because of their heavy plate armor, the Normans move slower than other tribes but take far less damage from attacks as a result; their shields can block arrows, making ranged attacks not so successful. The Mayans, on the other hand, can move faster than other tribes, and their weapons do more damage, but their light cloth armor ensures far more damage from attacks. Each tribe can also summon a "greater



The Persians (above) and Vikings (top) differ by more than just their looks



The hectic gameplay doesn't always come from battles: stray lightning strikes (above left) and snow flurries (above right) can cause problems for both novice and expert players



Yes, this could be Warcraft II in front of a mirror, but the two games are very different. The replayability is much greater due to the seven tribes

being," a godlike creature capable of either causing huge damage (such as the Normans' Dragon and the Vikings' Thor), or providing noncombat bonuses (including the Japanese Mind Turner and Mayan Kukulcan).

The game also features some rather innovative military units. The most interesting is the Porcupine, a vehicle specifically designed to be destroyed by the player. These can be wheeled into enemy territory and fired at; upon impact, these vehicles will cause a rather large explosion that will wreak havoc on enemy formations and buildings. Other units, like the standard catapult, become more than ordinary when more powerful versions are researched. Basic stones are replaced with naphtha projectiles, which in turn become capable of hitting a wider area. Ballista can be upgraded to reload faster, do more damage, and target a wider area.

Another new feature is the method of receiving new troops. Among the many structures workers can build is the Inn. At the Inn, unaligned soldiers

and workers from around the world gather, waiting to be recruited by any tribe. Also lurking in these buildings are spies, so players have to be careful whom they recruit. Since these units are essentially mercenaries, their loyalty to the tribe is very low. Boons and grants must be bestowed upon them to keep them in line.

Loyalty is very important in Seven Kingdoms, as the specter of rebellion is even more present than it was in Civilization. But in this case, when peasants rebel, they can subvert a village, or even form a new kingdom, which players will then have to conquer in due course. When mobile troops rebel, they can attack their home village, settle a new one, or even defect to another tribe. Hiring new troops can offset this eventualty, but it is best to keep armies as loyal as possible.

While PC gamers wait for Warcraft 3 and the Meier-less Civilization 3, Seven Kingdoms could be an excellent title to tide them over. Having seven distinct tribes to choose from makes the replay value of the game skyrocket, which is fortunate. This game looks as if it's just plain fun.



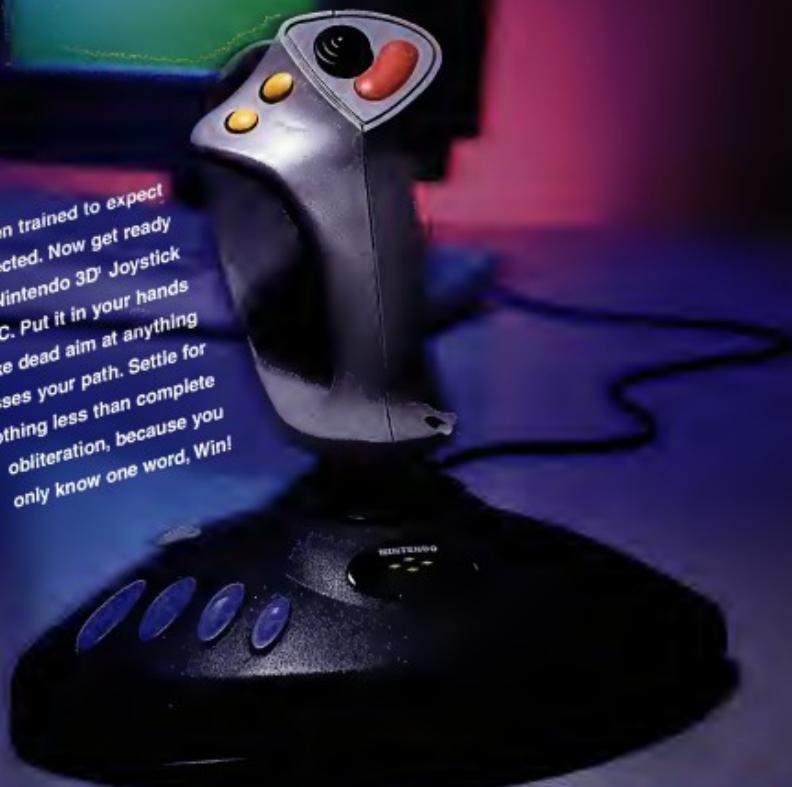
For once, the concept art looks remarkably similar to the in-game structures



When greater beings (above left) show up, it's time to run for cover. Ditto for the naphtha shooters (above right) and other powerful units (top)

The Nintendo 3Dⁱ Joystick For Your PC.

You have been trained to expect
the unexpected. Now get ready
for the Nintendo 3D Joystick
for your PC. Put it in your hands
and take dead aim at anything
that crosses your path. Settle for
nothing less than complete
obliteration, because you
only know one word, Win!



NINTENDO



NINTENDO 3D JOYSTICK

LARAL GROUP



LARAL GROUP LLC 500 EASTERN PARKWAY KODAK, GA 30146
© 1997 NINTENDO. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Available At:
COMPAQ USA

For More Information:
1-888-229-2118

NGI

READY TO WEAR

FOR THE PLAYSTATION™ GAME CONSOLE

" Reality Quest's The Glove...
will change the way you
play games."

- **GamePro**
July 1997

" The Glove does
give the dedicated
gamer a competitive
control advantage."

- **Ultra
GamePlayers**
July 1997

" The coveted Glove
is a truly revolutionary
controller."

- **PSM**
October 1997



Licence Pending

• 100% Compatible
with the Standard
Controller for the
PlayStation™
Game Console

• Digital, Analog, and
Simulated Analog
Modes

• Plug 'n Play



the VIDEO GAME CONTROL **GLOVE**



FOR MORE INFORMATION AND AVAILABILITY, CHECK OUT
[HTTP://WWW.THEGLOVE.COM](http://www.theglove.com)

Licensed by Sony Computer Entertainment America for use with the PlayStation game console.
PlayStation and the PlayStation logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

and Reality Quest are trademarks of
Reality Quest Corporation.

Motor Raid

Having classics like Out Run and Daytona USA already under its belt, it would have been easy for AM2 to continually chum out similar titles for an eternally grateful audience. However, obviously keen to move away from the realistic contemporary vehicles and believably backgrounds that have inhabited its previous racers, the team has chosen to give its latest adrenaline rush a completely different feel.

This change in direction is most immediately obvious in visual terms. Motor Raid looks very much like a cross between anime classic Akira and Wipeout, with futuristic icons lining the tracks and brash, colorful design throughout. The circuits themselves are also reminiscent of the PsychoPass racer, with huge hills and drops replacing the usual flat urban settings.

The gameplay too represents a shift in

The racing coin-op genre motors on, courtesy of Sega's AM2 division

Format:	Arcade
Publisher:	Sega
Developer:	Sega AM2
Release Date:	TBA
Origin:	Japan



Racing game tradition dictates that the player is able to select from a number of models



The congestion of the racing game scene has forced AM2 to move out of the modern-day-styled arena. Motor Raid adopts a theme that is pure science fiction, with tracks vaguely reminiscent of those in Wipeout

direction. Not only has AM2 gone for motorbikes instead of swish sports cars (there are five different cycles with varying abilities), but the team has also brought in a *Street Fighter*-style fighting element. Here, players are able to lock and punch other drivers via buttons that appear to the left of the handlebars. The only problem here, it seems, is that the realistic racing physics so beloved by driving game otaku have had to be simplified to make way for the combat element.

By the standards of a traditionally conservative design team, Motor Raid is a significant change in direction, and it will be interesting to see how coin-op fans react. Also interesting is the fact that the title runs on Model 2 rather than Model 3 — a sign either that Sega is keen to continue exploring older technology or that high-tech K3 (Image Generators) such as Model 3 are still prohibitively expensive. Whatever the case, a rash of sci-fi combat racers should be expected in Motor Raid's wake.



AM2 has obviously progressed from its Hang On bike era, bringing Akira-style vehicles to the racing genre

A NEW FORM OF LIFE...

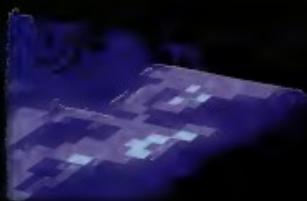
YOU'VE ACCESSED GALAPAGOS™: AN UNSTABLE, TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED WORLD OF ELECTRIC BLUE CORRIDORS AND OMINOUS DIMENSIONAL GATES. POPULATED BY LEGIONS OF MECHANIZED SOLDIERS, GALAPAGOS OVERTHROWS NEIGHBORING WORLDS AND ALIGNS THEM TO ITS INTERNAL DIMENSION, DRAINING RESOURCES AND ANNIHILATING INHABITANTS.

TWISTED BY GENIUS AND GREED, THE CREATORS OF GALAPAGOS EXPERIMENT WITH PILLAGED RESOURCES TO CONSTRUCT PRE-PROGRAMMED MACHINES OF WAR. MENDEL IS THE EXCEPTION.

MENDEL IS A SYNTHETIC ORGANISM WITH THE UNIQUE ABILITY TO LEARN. BENEATH HIS ALLOY SHELL IS A TECHNOLOGY THAT SERVES AS HIS MIND, ALLOWING HIM TO LEARN AND ADAPT TO HIS ENVIRONMENT THROUGH TRIAL AND ERROR. HE IS THE PROTOTYPE TO A NEW GENERATION OF AUTONOMOUS WAR MACHINES, AND IF HIS ENGINEERING IS REPRODUCED, GALAPAGOS WOULD BE UNSTOPPABLE!

BUT MENDEL IS HARMLESS AND ALONE. HE'S TRAPPED IN A LABORATORY AWAITING TORTURIOUS EXPERIMENTS DESIGNED TO TEST THE SCOPE OF THIS NEW TECHNOLOGY. YOU CAN HELP HIM, BUT YOU CAN'T CONTROL HIM. IF MENDEL DOESN'T ESCAPE, GALAPAGOS WILL PROSPER, AND ITS TYRANNICAL ARMY WILL RAVAGE THE GALAXY.

MENDEL MUST ESCAPE FROM GALAPAGOS!



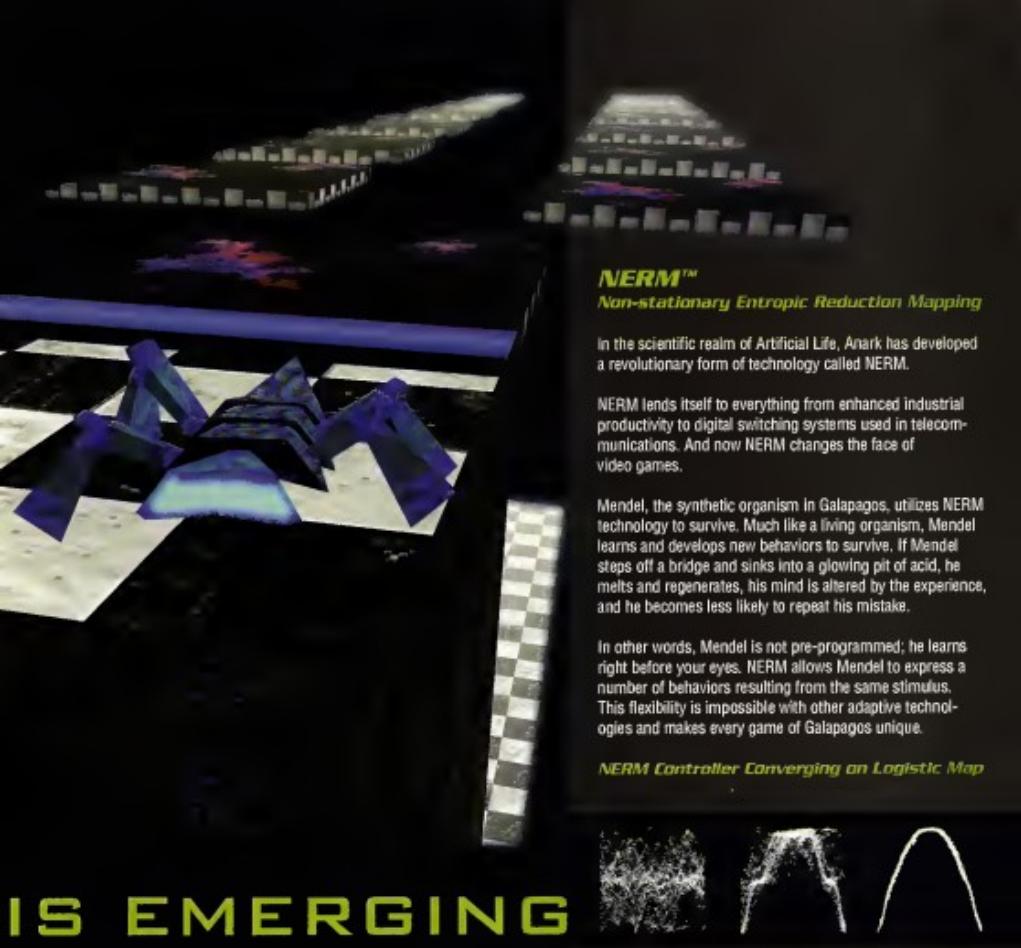
GALAPAGOS
Tyrannous Command Center



SINE
Toxic Cloud Mine



LUMEN
Subterranean Powerplant



IS EMERGING

"MORE THAN ANY OTHER TITLE EVER PREVIEWED IN NEXT GENERATION, THE TECHNOLOGIES PIONEERED IN THIS TITLE MAY SIGNIFICANTLY CHANGE THE WAY WE PLAY GAMES IN THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS." — NEXT GENERATION

NERM™

Non-stationary Entropic Reduction Mapping

In the scientific realm of Artificial Life, Anark has developed a revolutionary form of technology called NERM.

NERM lends itself to everything from enhanced industrial productivity to digital switching systems used in telecommunications. And now NERM changes the face of video games.

Mendel, the synthetic organism in Galapagos, utilizes NERM technology to survive. Much like a living organism, Mendel learns and develops new behaviors to survive. If Mendel steps off a bridge and sinks into a glowing pit of acid, he melts and regenerates, his mind is altered by the experience, and he becomes less likely to repeat his mistake.

In other words, Mendel is not pre-programmed; he learns right before your eyes. NERM allows Mendel to express a number of behaviors resulting from the same stimulus. This flexibility is impossible with other adaptive technologies and makes every game of Galapagos unique.

NERM Controller Converging on Logistic Map



GALAPAGOS™ MENDEL'S ESCAPE



PLDN
Lethal Refinery



HELEN
Gothic Temple

Download
the Windows® 95/
Mac OS® demo today.

WWW.EA.COM/EAD

Order yours today.
Call (800) 245-4525.



Outwars



Aerial combat via the glider wings (above) is only part of the action, as players explore terrain and battle the "Hydran," an alien species.

In its continuing quest to refine 3D action, Singletrac moves from PlayStation to PC



One of the bigger announcements made at E3 was the surprise acquisition of Singletrac by GT Interactive. Now owned by GT, Singletrac will consummate its marriage to the publishing giant once its last contracted project, *Outwars*, is finished for Microsoft.

Outwars is certainly one of Singletrac's more ambitious projects to date. From either a first- or third-person perspective, the game places the player in the role of a space marine on a mission to save an alien-infested mining colony. Sure, the plot is directly stolen from the film *Aliens*, but *Outwars* is more than standard run-and-gun fare wrapped around a 3D engine.

"You don't want to run in there fast and start shooting them up," says Producer Scott Campbell. "You have to evaluate the situation and then plan your offense." A big part of the strategy involves selecting the correct weapons for the different environments and delegating AI-controlled team members within the game's 25 plus levels.

The game also adds some dynamic flight models, not only borrowing a jet pack similar to the one in *Duke Nukem 3D*, but also giving players retractable glider wings so they can soar like the jet in Singletrac's own *Warhawk*. "We've definitely leveraged a lot of the physics algorithms from some of the other games," Campbell says, "but most of the code is new code."

Format:	PC
Publisher:	Microsoft
Developer:	Singletrac
Release Date:	Q1 1998
Origin:	U.S.



Select a male or female character and one of several armored suits



Campbell, a veteran PlayStation producer who worked on *Warhawk* and the *Twisted Metal* series, explains that the new code was required to take advantage of the PC's capabilities and create the game's wide-open exteriors and large, cavernous interiors. *Outwars* requires at least a P133 to run and will take advantage of MMX machines and support several 3D accelerators, including the Rendition and 3Dfx chipsets.

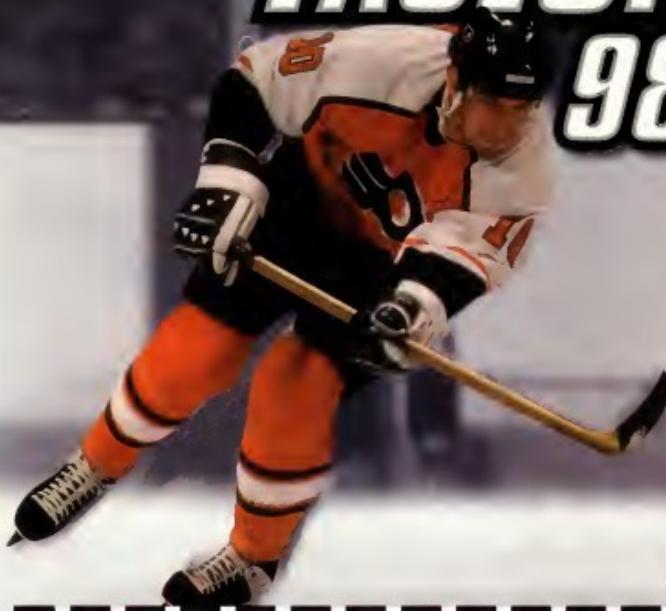
Interestingly, *Outwars* is Singletrac's first development effort beyond PlayStation (its top-secret Nintendo 64 project remains hush-hush), and it seems to be a surefooted step into multiplatform game development.



Making toast of an alien host (above). High in a jet pack jump (center)

"NET \$10.00 OFF"

NHL FACEOFF 98



PLAYSTATION
K&D
ATHLETIC DEPT.



\$10 OFF

SEARS
FUNTRONICS

NHL
FACEOFF
98



\$10 OFF



R 5 7 7 0 1 3 1 # 1 0 0 0

Good for \$10 off Sears Funtronics Dept. regular purchase price. Valid 10/1/97-12/31/97 only. Offer not good on layaway balances, gift certificates or credit card purchases. Not redeemable for cash. Not valid with any other coupons or offers. Limit one coupon per transaction, one per customer. Void where prohibited by law. © 1997 Sears, Roebuck and Co., Indianapolis, Indiana 46268. NHL and NHLPA are registered trademarks of the National Hockey League. NHL and NHLPA are trademarks of the National Hockey League. All NHL logos and marks and NHL Team logos and marks depicted herein are the property of the NHL and the respective teams and may not be reproduced without the prior written consent of NHL Enterprises, LP. © 1997 NHL. Officially licensed product of the National Hockey League. National Hockey League Players' Association. NHLPA and NHLPA logo are trademarks of the NHLPA and are used, under license, by Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. © NHLPA. Officially Licensed Product of the National Hockey League Players' Association. Designed and developed by Killer Game. © 1997 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc.

These games included:



Moto Racer



Tarok's Dinosaur Hunter



Longbow FX



Now Get Arcade Thrills from a PC Graphics Card!

Putting on Intense 3D Voodoo graphics card in your PC is like getting a coin-op 3D game arcade. With 3Dfx Interactive's Voodoo Rush technology, Intense 3D Voodoo delivers everything you want in a game card...super 3D acceleration, 2D acceleration, DVD support, NTSC and PAL output to television...and more! Enhances More Games!

3Dfx Voodoo Rush technology is the popular standard and is widely supported among game developers. In fact, more than 150 new 3Dfx supported games are expected to be available by the end of this year!

Put an Arcade in Your PC!

Don't miss the arcade fun. Buy Intense 3D Voodoo now from your local computer retailer!



Intense 3D Voodoo delivers arcade-quality 3D graphics on your PC.

INTERGRAPH
COMPUTER SYSTEMS

www.intergraph.com



Intergraph and the intergraph logo are registered trademarks and Intense 3D and the Intense 3D Voodoo logo are trademarks of Intergraph Corporation. Electronic Arts is a registered trademark and EA is a trademark of Electronic Arts. Jewel is a registered trademark of Jewel Information Group, Ltd. and Intergraph. Moto Racer is a trademark of Codemasters Software. The name 3Dfx is a registered trademark of 3Dfx Interactive, a subsidiary of Cirrus Logic, Inc. Futuremark is a registered trademark of Futuremark Corporation. AccuSync is a registered trademark of AccuSync International, Inc. DVD is a registered trademark of DVD Forum Forum. Microsoft and Windows are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. Other brands and product names are trademarks of their respective owners. Copyright 1997 Intergraph Corporation, Huntsville, AL 35894-0001. MC 9719629 9/97

Einhander



Few could have predicted just how much Square would benefit PlayStation when the RPG king chose CD-ROM and an existing system over cartridges and the then-ultra 64. Final Fantasy VII could be the system's best-selling game so far. Bushido Blade and the Toba! series have shaken up the fighting game. And now, Einhander, Square's new shooter, promises to breathe more life into a steadily insipidizing genre.

Einhander sports many features that may rekindle the spirit of Gradius. Foremost among those is seamless gameplay — there are no breaks between stages and no loading.

Square has proven it can handle RPGs and fighting games, but are shooters a bit too much?

Format:	PlayStation
Publisher:	Square
Developer:	Square
Release Date:	TBA
Origin:	Japan



This *Blade Runner*-style scene shows just how impressive the graphics are. Enemies that look like locomotives are only the tip of the iceberg.



The 3D aspect of Einhander is what makes the game noteworthy — be it screaming down a highway or dodging fire from a huge boss.

screens. The data continuously loads from the CD during the game, making for a rather hectic experience. The sense of urgency is especially prevalent in the first level, where players will begin with no weapons — and only by stealing from weakened enemies can the Einhander fit itself with weapons.

Square's magic touch is evident throughout Einhander. The developers are incorporating some truly breathtaking effects into the backgrounds, such as neon signs and afterburner fire, all of which showcase PlayStation's light-sourcing abilities unlike any shooter to date. The attention to detail is also evident in the weapons, which range from rocket launchers to machine guns to a blazing laser sword that leaves trails when used.

If after Final Fantasy VII and Bushido Blade Square can achieve hits with Einhander (and *Front Mission Alternative*, see page 133), its already impressive repertoire — and its new affiliate label program — could have Electronic Arts looking over its shoulder before too long.



Vibrant and involving locales ensure nearly full in the action.



Calendar of Events

NOVEMBER

Live events begin 6:00 PM PST unless otherwise noted. Contests and polls will be posted by 6:00 PM on the designated days.

www.imaginegames.com



Sat Nov 1: **Zero Gravity Win Games From Shiny!** Take a look at the latest from Shiny, the creators of Earthworm Jim, and enter to win an autographed Wild 9 Bible, autographed Wild 9 art, and a copy of Shiny's hit title, *MDC*. www.zerogravx.com

Mon Nov 3: **N64.com The State of Gaming Cheats**: Cheats are now being built into games on a regular basis, and are a solid part of life. Are gamers spoiled by cheats? Are they a good thing? www.64.com

Mon Nov 3: **Voodoo Extreme Dig the Limer**: For five days straight Voodoo Extreme will give out either a 3Dfx mouse pad, 3Dfx T-shirt or a 3D accelerated game. On the final day of the contest (11/17/97) we will giveaway a Canopus Pure 3D 3Dfx based board — so we are one of these spiffy prizes submit a "one-liner" to be used on our site for that day. We'll play the best one-liners each day and a lucky winner will receive one of the prizes mentioned. www.voodoextreme.com

Tues Nov 4: **Ultra Game Players Hot! Hot! Hot!**: 1996 is just around the corner, and with the new year will come a slew of hot games. Which ones will be the biggest? Join UGP Online in The Palace to speak your mind! www.ugponline.com

Tues Nov 4: **Third Generation Eagle Max Giveaway**: Third Generation and ACT Labs have teamed up to give away awesome new force feedback steering wheels and T-Shirts. www.3rdgeneration.com

Wed Nov 5: **SaturnWorld Japanese for Gamers**: SaturnWorld continues language lessons in the world of bits and bytes. This month: 50 new terms for RPG'ers. www.saturnworld.com

Wed Nov 5: **GameFAQs GameFAQs' Second Birthday Contest**: And what's a birthday party without presents? Come celebrate with us and take part in our Birthday Contest! www.gameFAQs.com

Thur Nov 6: **Next Generation Online Download Demolition**: Five new demos of the hottest new games will be added to Next Generation Online's ever-growing demo collection. www.ngsonline.com

Fri Nov 7: **PSXPower Update Your Wardrobe**: PSXPower wants to give away the shirts off our backs! We've got a ton of game-related clothes, from T-shirts to hats to jackets. Be the envy of all your friends when you show up at the suds shop covered in the latest video game attire! www.psxpowers.com

Mon Nov 10: **N64.com Delays, delays, delays**: Why the hell are games always being delayed? Do game companies simply not know how to predict? Is it really quality over quantity? N64.com takes a look at why delays are driving gamers to buy other consoles. www.64.com

Mon Nov 10: **Zero Gravity The Great Game Idea Contest**: Sick of lame game ideas? Think you could come up with a better one in your sleep? Well, prove it. Zero Gravity wants to hear your idea. The best ones win a cool pack of free games. www.zerogravx.com

Tues Nov 11: **Ultra Game Players Bloodlines**: From Castlevania to Symphony of the Night, UGP Online traces the roots of Konami's vampire-infested adventure series. www.ugponline.com

Wed Nov 12: **SaturnWorld Burning Rangers Special**: Get the information you've been searching for with a special SaturnWorld profile of the Sonic Team's latest game! www.saturnworld.com

Thurs Nov 13: **Next Generation Online Super Q&A Day**: Join the editors of Next Generation Online as they shed light on your most pressing videogame questions. More than 20 questions will be answered in this double-edged Q&A! www.ngsonline.com

Fri Nov 14: **PSXPower History of Namco**: With Tekken 3 just around the corner, PSXPower takes a look at Namco, from its humble origins to its current status as an industry leader. www.psxpowers.com

Mon Nov 17: **N64.com Namco and Nintendo's History**: You asked for it — the history of Namco and Nintendo. We bring you the competition, the power struggles (the sagas), and how the two major Japanese game companies are working it out today. www.64.com

Tues Nov 18: **PSXPower Frogger™ Contest Night**: Frogger is back! Jump over to the PSXPower Palace and join editors as they speak with Heebie Interactive. Get your most pressing questions answered! An exclusive contest immediately follows, where you can win dozens of Frogger goodies. www.psxpowers.com

Tues Nov 18: **Ultra Game Players Lara's Back Tomb Raider 2 is on the way**: Meet up with UGP Online in The Palace for a first-hand account of what to expect from Core's adventure tour de force. www.ugponline.com

Affiliates:



PlayStation

Saturn





Pre-Order the hottest games online with IGN and EB!

In an effort to make it easier for you to get the games you want, the Imagine Games Network and Electronics Boutique have joined forces to offer an exciting and FREE service.

Through this exclusive partnership, IGN visitors can reserve their copies of the hottest games before they are released, by pre-purchasing them online, as well as purchase currently released titles. Now you can have the hottest games in your hands at practically the same time they hit store shelves, guaranteed – no lines, no malls, no hassles!

Make it easy on yourself!

www.imaginegames.com/store.html

All transactions are handled on a secure server.

Here's just a small sample of the hundreds of games currently available for order and pre-order through IGN:

Castlevania (PSX)
Colony Wars (PSX)
Crash Bandicoot 2 (PSX)

Dark Reign (PC)
Fighting Force (PSX)
Final Fantasy VII (PSX)
Hexen 2 (PC)
Jedi Knight (PC)
Madness 64 (N64)

Marvel Super Heroes (PSA)
Diddy Kong Racing (N64)
Ponche Challenge (PSX)
Postal (PC)
Quake 64 (N64)
Quarterback Club 98 (N64)

Resident Evil 2 (PSA/PC)
San Francisco Rush (N64)
Starfleet Academy (PC)
Starship Titanic (PC)
Tomb Raider II (PSX/PC)
Ultima Online (PC)

Wed Nov 19 PC Gamer Online **Blade Runner Contest** Join PC Gamer Online in The Palace to find out about Westwood Studio's first realistic 3D adventure, *Blade Runner*. Stick around for an exclusive IGN/Blade Runner contest immediately following. Free Westwood prizes and giveaways await! www.pcgamer.com

Wed Nov 19 SaturnWorld **Croc Strategy Guide** A level by level, course-by-course, dissection of the phenomenal Fox platformer. www.saturn-world.com

Thur Nov 20 PC Gamer Online **Southpeak Contest** Join PC Gamer Online for an exclusive contest sponsored by Southpeak Interactive. Don't miss your chance to win copies of their hottest fall title! www.pcgamer.com

Thur Nov 20 Next Generation Online **Holiday Title Poll** Next Generation Online will Poll its readers to find out which of the many holiday titles they are looking forward to the most. www.next-generation.com

Fri Nov 21 PSXPower Poll: **Pick a Mascot** Crash Bandicoot never really caught on as the mascot for the PlayStation like Sony thought it would. Do you think Crash deserves another chance, or do you have an idea for a new one? www.psxpowers.com

Sat Nov 22 Third Generation Game Contest **Win the best sports game ever** Konami's International SuperStar Soccer for the Nintendo 64 will be up for grabs. www.3rdgeneration.com

Monday Nov 24 N64.com **Top 10** A special report brought to you by N64 readers. Our readers' top 10 wish list and what games they hope to see coming to N64 in the future. www.n64.com

Tues Nov 25 Ultra Game Players **Hex'n** Who would have thought that Hexen II deathmatch could be so fun? Share your favorite deathmatch strategies with other Hexen 2 fanatics in UGP Online's Palace room. www.ultragameplayers.com

Wed Nov 26 PSXPower ONE Contest Join the PSXPower editors in The Palace as they talk with ABC Games about their latest PlayStation title 'ONE'. Find out everything you ever wanted to know about the company, then stay around for the exclusive IGN/ONE contest immediately following the chat! www.psxpowers.com

Wed Nov 26 SaturnWorld **The State of Sega** An in-depth analysis of Sega's performance with the Saturn, how it's going to end up, and what Sega should do to succeed with its next platform. www.saturnworld.com

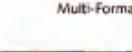
Thur Nov 27 Next Generation Online **3DFX Game of the Week Wrap-up** The Editors will look back to the best of the previous 3DFX Games of the Week and look forward to upcoming. www.next-generation.com

Thur Nov 27 Third Generation **Personality of the Year** Who do you think is gaming's most out-spoken "personality"? Could it be David Perry or Tommy Tallarico? How about Victor Ireland? Cast your vote. www.3rdgeneration.com

Fri Nov 28 PSXPower **What's Next for Square?** Square has a ton more games coming down the pipeline, but will any of them be as great as Final Fantasy VII? PSXPower weighs the pros and cons of Parasite Eve, Chocobo's Mystery Dungeon, Saga Frontier, and more! www.psxpowers.com

Friday Nov 28 PlayStation Nation **Holiday Wish List** Join PlayStation Nation as we talk about the most wanted games for the holidays. Send in suggestions, stories and your wish list! www.psnnation.com

Sunday Nov 30 Zero Gravity **Tomb Raider 2 Give Away** Can't get enough of the luscious Lara? Well, we've got her, and it's up to you to find her. If you can follow the clues to locate the lovely Ms. Croft (to be hidden all week long on ZG), then you will be entered in a drawing for a free copy of her latest adventure from Eidos! www.zerogravite.com



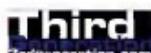
Multi-Format



Contest Sponsors



©1997 Hasbro, Inc. ©1997 Westwood Studios, Inc. All rights reserved.
Frogger is a trademark of Konami Co., LTD. ©1997 KONAMI. All rights reserved.



DREAMS

to reality



**THIS GAME
WILL REALLY OPEN
YOUR EYES.**

Your mind and soul,
as well.

3Dfx and Windows95 Native Hybrid.

©1997 CRYO Interactive Entertainment
1062 Union Street #116, San Francisco, CA 94102
www.cryo-interactive.com



Software developed by CRYO
Windows 95 and Mac
See your local retailer today! 1-800-420-8778



Dreams to reality: a visually spectacular action-adventure game in real-time 3D.
Live out your wildest, most vivid dreams...if you dare.

The way games ought to be...

In search of the future of gameplay

Great videogame art (with no pictures)

A"videogame artist" is someone who makes great videogames, not someone who draws pictures that end up getting used in videogames (no matter how great those pictures might be). Last month I argued that precious few realize this crucial difference, and that even within the videogame industry itself, there are too many people who don't realize that making videogames is a unique art unto itself. These people think that a game is merely a bunch of different art forms bundled together, slumped in a box labeled David Heevelhoff's Attack Force 9-in-1 (or whatever other license the publisher has managed to acquire), and then advertised in *Next Generation*.

These people approach making a videogame as if they were making some kind of monster — boiling on "limes one at a time, hoping a little entity will emerge. Like modern-day Dr Frankensteinians, they take a storyline, pick some comic book character sketches, borrow a piece of music, commission some guy prearranged CG sequences, sew them all together, give the cadaver a jolt of 10,000 volts, and at last: And what they discover is that they can make games this way but they're more likely to resemble inarticulate zombies than beautiful, sophisticated human beings.

Now this is a problem, because as long as the Dr. Frankensteinians of the game industry are given the run of the laboratory, their rowdy, aimless monsters are going to score off all the more flagrantly. Worthy creators, in other words, formulae seem-e-all-before clones will hog all of the development budgets and all of the marketing attention — at the expense of more experimental, less immediately commercial games. And why? Because formulaic monsters are what everyone's come to expect, and on first impression, they seem awfully impressive.

Gaming's finest moments

So that's the doom and gloom bit out of the way. Let's get to the positive side of the coin. The good news is, of course, that although underwritten and often sidelined, great videogame art does exist, and there are some supremely talented videogame artists out there. The trick, of course, is presenting the strokes of genius that elevate some gameplay experiences to the status of greatness. Because videogames are more than the sum of their parts — interactive experiences that have to be played to be truly understood — it's difficult on a printed page to discuss their nuances. Hence, the reason all *Next Generation* writers get paid such huge salaries. (After all) it's all about "feel" and "depth" and a sense of attentive interactivity — sensations not easily expressed in words.

But hope is at hand. There are pieces of videogame art that have been experienced and appreciated by so many gamers that their genius can become common points of reference. Hence, we can put them into words and discuss them here. These pieces of videogame art demonstrate the details that can help transcend the great, gameplay experience

beyond that of sitting in front of a TV screen or monitor. These are the master strokes that can take a gamers' breath away. And in examining some of these touches of genius or "great moments in gaming," we can hopefully learn more about this elusive art and encourage more of it. So, here goes — four examples of great videogame art:

* *The Space Invaders* music

It's the most simple game soundtrack ever — and possibly the best. A slow, low-pitched, mechanical "duhm, duhm, duhm, duhm" beats over and over, increasing in tempo as the wave of descending aliens swarm closer and closer towards your base. As the space invaders' approach accelerates from a deliberate march to a frantic scuttle, the creatures move in time to the quickening rhythm. It's chilling, it's mesmerizing, it gets the adrenaline pumping, and it's the perfect accompaniment to the gameplay.

* *Doom 2's* Tricks 'n' Traps

By the time players reach the Tricks 'n' Traps level of *Doom 2*, they know that hitting hard and early with the right weaponry is the best way to survive. Aim straight, keep moving, let 'em have it — that's the mind-set needed to win. It's also the mind-set that has led countless *Doom* players (myself included) to end up stuck — dying over and over again — after finding themselves outrun, cornered, and defenseless against an insurmountable enemy force of

by Neil West

Neil West is
Next Generation's
editor at large



high of having solved one of gaming's great puzzles. Classic stuff!

* *Super Mario 64's* triple jump

A videogame is essentially a conversation between a human and a piece of software. The software speaks via stages on a screen, the player speaks via button presses and directional movements on a joystick. But because of the relative simplicity of videogames, most roles merely require the player to move a silent game character around a physical terrain without much conversation or political debate. So it's quite appropriate that simple physical commands (button pressed) are used to command simple physical acts (left, right, leap, roll, and so on) in the game world.

There's a kind of synergy there.

The trick for game designers, then, is to make the most of this physical synergy. They must create a command system and player interface so seamless that the joyed movements and character motions seem one and the same. If they succeed, then players forget that they are holding a joystick at all (hence the reason they unconsciously start waving the joystick around in the air during hectic sections of play).

Shigeru Miyamoto is a past master in this art — just watch any player execute Mario's triple jump in Super Mario 64 and you'll know that Nintendo 64's showstopper title is a fine example.

Typically, the "stroke of genius" is surprisingly simple and low budget

CyberDemons, Imps, Demons, and a Baron of Hell

"It's all about level design," says John Romero, *Doom 2's* designer. And this particular *Doom 2's* level showcases his point perfectly. The touch of genius here is how he pulls the rug from beneath players' feet — but in a way that gamers have only themselves to blame if they fall. Here's how it happens: Upon finding yourself in a locked dungeon with a Baron of Hell and an army of Cyberdemons (plus assumed other nasties), you come out all guns blazing, and the entire gathering turns and rips you to shreds. If, however, you wait at the back of the room and observe the events that unfold if the monsters are left unprovoked, you notice that a squeaky breaks out and the Baron of Hell goes attacked by the others. Simply watch the fight from a safe distance, then wade in to finish off the weakened survivors. Easy — but only after you've figured it out for yourself. And then, there's that rush that only great gameplay can deliver — the feeling of total immersion in a robust game world that's harsh yet fair, and if you screw up, it's your own damn fault. Then there's the realization that a great game designer has just had you suckered for the past hour or so. And finally there's the

* *Warcraft 2's* sound bites ...

Click on any of your subordinates in *Warcraft 2* and their attention will be signaled by a small snippet of speech. From a doleful "Yes m'lord" to a razor-sharp "At your service!" these sound bites are ingenious because they do so many things at once. 1) They let you know that your mouse click was on target, and you now have a character highlighted and awaiting further instruction; 2) They do so in a way that doesn't add graphical clutter to an already crowded game screen; 3) They tell you what rank of person you have just highlighted — again, in a way that lets players focus their gaze elsewhere; 4) They add tremendous color and an extra human dimension to the game scenario, turning shallow character animations into real people; 5) They're funny!

When you click on a poor peon and he responds with a resigned, "What is it?" you know that he knows that you're about to make him do something laborious and very possibly suicidal. Or when a female elfin warrior coolly observes, "You don't touch the other elves that way" you feel almost guilty but this comedy isn't just facetious, it provides welcome comic relief from what would otherwise be a no-nonsense,

businesslike game. A master stroke from the designers at Blizzard.

Stroke of genius

So those are your examples of great videogame art that most gamers will have firsthand experience with. But there are plenty more. Think of your own favorite gameplay moments — the details or elements that you cherish highly. I'll bet that both your examples and mine have the following points in common:

1) The "stroke of genius" only works in the context of playing the game. It's not a piece of art that would be considered a big deal on its own. For example, you'd have a hard time playing Space Invaders "muted" at a party — it only works when your hands are on the controls.

2) Typically the "stroke of genius" is surprisingly simple and low budget. Certainly it doesn't require a fraction of the seven-figure development budget allocated to many of today's blockbusters. Often it's a simple question of timing or planning rather than a question of throwing money at a problem.

3) It's not something that can be easily put into words. Often you can see that the "stroke of genius" would not have appeared impressive in the game's original design document (and it's not something that will seem impressive to any gamer reading the game packaging). Exclaiming how, in, say Virtua Fighter, "the

more you play, the more you realize how much there is to learn" not only seems unconvincing (doesn't every game claim that?) but also a little disheartening ("you mean I never actually get to master it?"). The point here is that the game does but how it does it — you have to play to understand.

4) These "strokes of genius" are hardly ever graphical. As Sid Meier brilliantly observed in **NG 31**, "Good games take place in the player's mind, not on the computer screen. We can never put images on a TV or computer screen that are as realistic or as vivid as the images that we can conjure in a player's mind once they start to get drawn into a game. So even simple graphics, when combined with good gameplay, are perfectly good enough." And in this way, a programmer or designer can "create" better graphics than any artist.*

And you know what? He's 100% right. And all these examples serve to prove his point.

The sum of all the parts

So what conclusions can we draw?

First, it's easy to see that bringing in an expensive piece of art from the "outside" isn't the answer. Because outside art is self-sufficient, it's impossible to integrate it flawlessly into the interactive experience. The soundtrack to Wipeout, for example, includes some top-rate music from some of the world's best dance acts, but it merely

plays while the game unfolds — it's not part of the interactive experience.

Second, it's not about graphics. It's what a videogame artist can do to make the game feel right, play right, and believe right. It's not how the game looks on the screen that's important, but the fantasy game world that is created in the players' mind.

Third, the best ideas are usually the simplest ones. It's about understanding how the game works and harmonizing all of its elements — design, interface, graphics, sound. It's like cooking a meal — taking ingredients and creating something new. And as any great chef will tell you, the smallest touch of salt can go a long way.



Want to respond?

We'll be including a "The Way Games Ought To Be" Q&A in future issues, so if you have any comments, criticisms, or questions, email Neil West at ngmail@imagineinc.com or write The Way Games Ought To Be, Next Generation, Imagine Publishing, 150 North Hill Drive, Brisbane, CA 94005. Email is, of course, our preferred method of communication.

The world's #1 computer and videogame authority

NEXT GENERATION

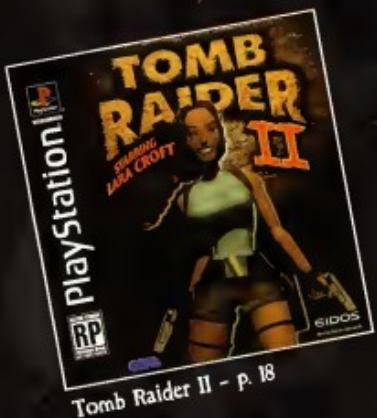
Oct/Nov. 1997 Issue 4

new games!



Madden Football 64 - p. 20

extreme!



Tomb Raider II - p. 18

hot titles!

Look What's New At EB!



GameShark Nintendo 64 - p. 26

the best
games!

SP

www.ebworld.com

SB

The Latest From Nintendo 64!



Nintendo

Tetrisphere 64

Remove the Tetris-style blocks and penetrate the core of a rotating 3-D sphere! 300-plus levels of play!

NINTENDO 64

\$69.99



Nintendo

Mischief Makers 64

Shake up the Evil Empire. More than 50 stages in all!

NINTENDO 64

\$69.99

Now Here!



Nintendo

Nintendo 64

The most incredible game play ever! 3-D graphics.

NINTENDO 64

\$149.99



Nintendo

Nintendo 64 Rumble Pak

See how it feels to feel what you see!

NINTENDO 64

\$19.99



Nintendo

Nintendo 64 RF Switch Set

Connects to a TV or VCR that does not have A/V connections.

NINTENDO 64

\$29.99



Nintendo

Nintendo 64 Controllers

360° joystick. Hot vibrant colors—blue, yellow, black, red, green, grey.

NINTENDO 64

\$29.99 EACH



Nintendo

Nintendo 64 Memory Pak

Save game stats, data and build up character.

NINTENDO 64

\$19.99



electronics
boutique

CHANGE THE SYSTEM!

TM, ©, and product names are registered trademarks of Nintendo of America. © 1997 Nintendo.

Call 1-800-800-5166 for the store nearest you!

There's Always More N64!

EB



Nintendo

GoldenEye 64

Take on dangerous missions in 20 intense stages using 18 different weapons!

NINTENDO 64

\$69.99



Nintendo

StarFox 64

Experience gaming like you've never felt before—new Rumble Pak accessory included.

NINTENDO 64

\$59.99



Nintendo

Mario Kart 64

Three...Two...One...Go! Everyone's favorite characters are back.

NINTENDO 64

\$59.99



Nintendo

Cruis'n USA

A classic arcade game taken to the extreme! Complete control.

NINTENDO 64

\$59.99



Nintendo

Blast Corps

Blast your way through all 60 levels.

NINTENDO 64

\$59.99



Nintendo

Super Mario 64

Called by many, "the greatest video game of all time".

NINTENDO 64

\$59.99



Nintendo

Wave Race 64

Jump on your jet ski and ride!

NINTENDO 64

\$69.99



Nintendo

Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire

Incredible variety, awesome flying levels and intense confrontation.

NINTENDO 64

\$69.99



CHANGE THE SYSTEM!

TM, ®, and product names are registered trademarks of Nintendo of America. © 1997 Nintendo.

Where else but on-line! www.ebworld.com

SB

Grab It And Go!



**GAME BOY[®]
POCKET
COLORS**

GAME BOY[®] **COLORS**

- brighter screen
- smaller size
- plays all Game Boy games

Nintendo

New Game Boy Pocket Colors

30% smaller version that plays all your favorite game! 6 cool colors.

GAMEBOY

\$49.99 EACH



Nintendo
**James
Bond 007**

Great gadgets, fast cars, danger at every step of the way. Eleven levels includes three racing stages.
GAMEBOY
\$29.99



Nintendo
Kirby's Star Stacker
Join Kirby and his friends for pure puzzle fun!
GAMEBOY
\$19.99

Nintendo
**Ken Griffey Jr.
Major League Baseball**
Real players' teams, stats and stadiums!
GAMEBOY
\$24.99

GAME BOY

TM, ®, and product names are registered trademarks of Nintendo of America. © 1997 Nintendo.

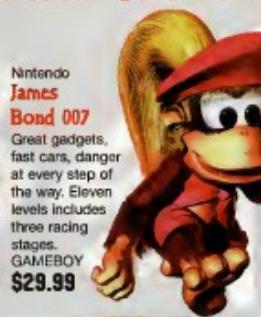
**electronics
boutique[®]**

Call 1-800-800-5166 for the store nearest you!

GAME BOY

TM, ®, and product names are registered trademarks of Nintendo of America. © 1997 Nintendo.

Call 1-800-800-5166 for the store nearest you!

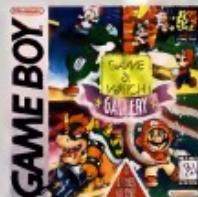


Nintendo
**Donkey Kong
Land 3**

Help Dixie and Kiddy Kong find the Lost World!
GAMEBOY
\$29.99



Nintendo
Tetris Plus
Three different games plus the all new Puzzle mode!
GAMEBOY
\$19.99



Nintendo
Game & Watch Gallery
Classic and modern versions with improved control and sound effects!
GAMEBOY
\$19.99

Everybody's Got 'em!

EB



Nintendo
Donkey Kong Land 2

All new adventure. Tons of bonuses, hidden items, and surprise traps!

GAMEBOY

\$34.99



Nintendo
Battle Arena Toshinden

The toughest fighters take part in the most grueling slugfest.

GAMEBOY

\$19.99



Nintendo
Mole Mania

Get into the mania as you challenge 175 puzzles.

GAMEBOY

\$19.99



Nintendo
King of Fighters '95

Select 15 unique warriors and crown the King.

GAMEBOY

\$29.99



Nintendo
Dr. Mario

Destroy viruses by arranging falling vitamins in a bottle.

GAMEBOY

\$19.99



Nintendo
Metroid II
Space Hunter Samus returns to battle a planet.

GAMEBOY

\$19.99



Nintendo
Donkey Kong Land
Over 30 levels, plus tons of hidden secrets!

GAMEBOY

\$19.99



Nintendo
Star Wars

Be Luke Skywalker and strike the Evil Empire!

GAMEBOY

\$19.99



Nintendo
**Legend of Zelda:
Link's Awakening**

Link comes to Game Boy with an all new adventure.

GAMEBOY

\$19.99



Nintendo
Bugs Bunny: Crazy Castle 2
Search through 28 multi-level rooms to rescue Honey Bunny.

GAMEBOY

\$19.99



Nintendo
Mega Man: Dr. Wily's Revenge
6 pulverizing levels ruled by android annihilators. (For one player only)

GAMEBOY

\$19.99



Nintendo
Tetris

Classic mind-boggling video puzzle from Russia!

GAMEBOY

\$19.99



Nintendo
Space Invaders

Test your skills against a horde of alien invaders.

GAMEBOY

\$19.99



Nintendo
Kirby's Pinball Land
Launch Kirby into uncharted worlds and battle surprise enemies.

GAMEBOY

\$19.99



Nintendo
Super Mario Land
Ancient ruins, giant crabs await you in this world of adventure!

GAMEBOY

\$19.99



Nintendo
**Super Mario Land 2:
6 Golden Coins**

Travel through 6 zones of amazing adventure.

GAMEBOY

\$19.99

TM, ®, and product names are registered trademarks of Nintendo of America. © 1997 Nintendo.

Where else but on-line! www.cbworld.com

SB

SNES! Get 'em All!



Nintendo
Yoshi's Island Set
Everything you need to play is included.
SUPER NES
\$99.99



Nintendo
Kirby Dreamland 3
Kirby's back with another great sequel!
SUPER NES
\$49.99



Nintendo
**Donkey Kong Country 3:
Dixie Kong's Double Trouble!**
New friends and enemies for Dixie and Kiddy Kong.
SUPER NES
\$69.99



Nintendo
Tetris Attack
New levels of addictive obstacles!
SUPER NES
\$34.99



Nintendo
Kirby Super Star
8 games in one!
SUPER NES
\$49.99



Nintendo
F-Zero
Reach speeds of over 500km/h and race for intergalactic fame!
SUPER NES
\$34.99



Nintendo
Arkanoid
One of the most loved video games is back.
SUPER NES
\$34.99



Nintendo
Space Invaders
Arcade-perfect version of the original.
SUPER NES
\$34.99



Nintendo
Super Metroid
Take on a legion of Space Pirates and a new Metroid force.
SUPER NES
\$34.99



Nintendo
Tetris & Dr. Mario
Two great puzzle games in one game pack!
SUPER NES
\$34.99



Nintendo
Super Star Wars
Take on the fight for galactic freedom as a Jedi Knight.
SUPER NES
\$34.99



Nintendo
Super Mario Kart
Master the unique driving styles of classic Nintendo characters.
SUPER NES
\$34.99



Nintendo
Super Mario All Stars
Includes the unreleased "lost levels".
SUPER NES
\$34.99



Nintendo
Tetris 2
A tougher Tetris with 30 levels.
SUPER NES
\$34.99



Nintendo
Mario Paint with Mouse
Compose music, draw, color and animate.
SUPER NES
\$34.99



Nintendo
Sim City
Create a town and manage its growth.
SUPER NES
\$34.99



Nintendo
Killer Instinct
Stunning fighting with awesome graphics!
SUPER NES
\$29.99

SUPER NINTENDO
ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM



TM, ®, and product names are registered trademarks of Nintendo of America. © 1997 Nintendo.

PlayStation™

EB



A.



B.

SONY



C.



D.



E.



F.



G.

Final Fantasy VII

A. Ground breaking

graphics and sounds.

PLAYSTATION

\$49.99

Bushido Blade

B. Takes sword fighting

into a cinematic experience.

PLAYSTATION

\$44.99

Controller

C. Excellent ergonomics

and durability for hours.

PLAYSTATION

\$19.99

Memory Card

D. Save and copy your

game positions at any time.

PLAYSTATION

\$19.99

RFU Adapter

E. Connect to your TV

with no video input terminal.

PLAYSTATION

\$24.99

Multi Tap

F. For use with PlayStation

games bearing the Multi Tap.

PLAYSTATION

\$39.99

PlayStation

Game Console

G. Prepare for a blast of

ultimate system pleasure.

PLAYSTATION

\$149.99

Where else but on-line! www.ebwORLD.com

SB

PlayStation™

NFL Gameday '98



A.



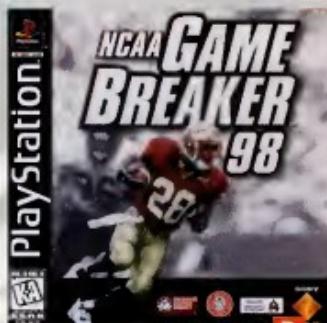
PlayStation

C.

NHL Face Off '98

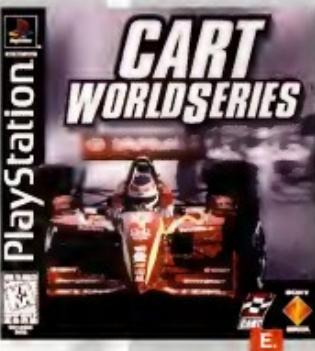


B.



PlayStation

D.



PlayStation

E.



PlayStation

F.

electronics
boutique®

Call 1-800-800-5166 for the store nearest you!

NFL Gameday '98

A. The most powerful polygonal graphics ever.
PLAYSTATION

\$39.99

NHL Face Off '98

B. The most realistic NHL hockey action ever!
PLAYSTATION

\$44.99

MLB '98

C. The most realistic and fastest playing polygonal baseball game ever made.
PLAYSTATION

\$44.99

NCAA Game Breaker '98

D. The best college football game ever made!
PLAYSTATION

\$44.99

Cart World Series

E. Indy Car Racing at its finest.
PLAYSTATION

\$44.99

Porsche Challenge

F. Get behind the wheel of a Porsche Boxster.
PLAYSTATION

\$44.99

PlayStation™

EB

Armored Core



A.

Parappa The Rapper

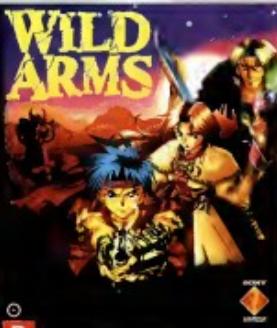


C.



E.

PlayStation™



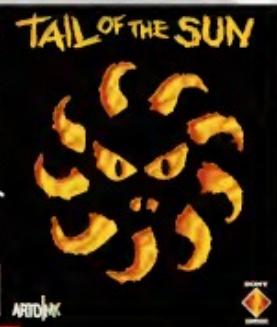
B.

PlayStation™



D.

PlayStation™



F.

Armored Core

A. The ultimate in hard core 3D action.
PLAYSTATION
\$44.99

Wild Arms

B. Adventure mixed with fantasy and Japanese-style science fiction.
PLAYSTATION
\$44.99

Parappa The Rapper

C. Originality soars in this Hip Hop music game.
PLAYSTATION
\$44.99

Intelligent Cube

D. Put your I.Q. to the test.
PLAYSTATION
\$44.99

Steel Reign

E. State of the art 3D tank combat with real terrain technology.
PLAYSTATION
\$44.99

Tail Of The Sun

F. Enter a wild and primitive world and experience life as it was.
PLAYSTATION
\$44.99

Where else but on-line! www.ebwORLD.com

EB

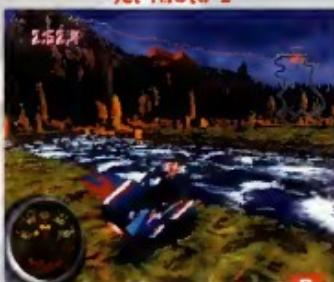
PlayStation™

Crash Bandicoot 2



A.

Jet Moto 2



B.

Crash Bandicoot 2

A. Crash into a whole new adventure and experience!

PLAYSTATION

\$44.99

Jet Moto 2

B. Speed to the bleeding edge of 3D racing.

PLAYSTATION

\$44.99

Cool Boarders 2

C. The ultimate snowboarding competition.

PLAYSTATION

\$44.99

Rally Cross

D. Become the next rally car champion. Awesome!

PLAYSTATION

\$44.99

Twisted Metal 2

E. 3D car combat that reaches new heights from around the world.

PLAYSTATION

\$44.99

Blasto

F. Wipe-out alien invasions from the galaxy.

PLAYSTATION

\$44.99



PlayStation

C.



PlayStation

D.



PlayStation

E.



F.

electronics

boutique Call 1-800-800-5166 for the store nearest you!

PlayStation™ Greatest Hits

EB



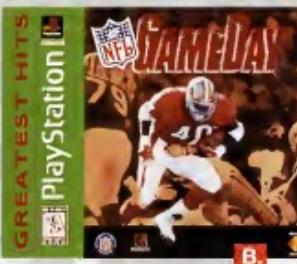
A.



C.



E.



B.



D.



F.



G.

Crash Bandicoot

A. Twisted enemies in a search for truth and justice.
PLAYSTATION

\$24.99

GameDay '97

B. Featuring all 30 NFL Teams (over 1,500 players), and real uniforms.
PLAYSTATION

\$24.99

2Xtreme

C. Four great sporting venues that include 12 new courses.
PLAYSTATION

\$24.99

NHL Face Off '97

D. Innovative new features and strategies.
PLAYSTATION

\$24.99

Jet Moto

E. Hurdle over a range of obstacles on a bike that's part rocket.
PLAYSTATION

\$24.99

Twisted Metal

F. 3D car combat that reaches new heights.
PLAYSTATION

\$19.99



WarHawk

G. Pilot the prime assault craft against deadly forces.
PLAYSTATION

\$19.99

Where else but on-line! www.ebworld.com

SB

Psygnosis Games



A.



B.



C.



D.



E.



F.

Psygnosis **Colony Wars**

A. A revolutionary, real-time 3D arcade.
ARMAGEDDON.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99

Psygnosis **G-Police**

B. Patrol the streets in a state-of-the-art GunShip.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99

Psygnosis **Formula 1 C.E.**

C. The most realistic sports racing game.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99

Psygnosis **DiscWorld 2**

D. The incompetent wizard faces outrageous new characters.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99

Psygnosis **Destruction Derby**

E. The smash-'em up driving game that makes history.
PLAYSTATION
\$24.99

Psygnosis **Wipe Out**

F. A brutal new generation of anti-gravity racing.
PLAYSTATION
\$24.99

electronics boutique Call 1-800-800-5166 for the store nearest you!

Video Games

EB

PlayStation



PlayStation



PlayStation



Midway

Mace

The Dark Age

A. Presenting the wildest 3D fighting game ever.
PLAYSTATION

\$49.99

Midway

Maximum Force

B. Beautifully rendered 3D graphics. Movie quality music and sound effects.
PLAYSTATION/SATURN

\$49.99

Midway

Mortal Kombat

Mythologies Sub Zro

C. Heart-pounding action and hours of exploration.
PLAYSTATION/NINTENDO 64

\$49.99/69.99

Jaleco

Tetris Plus

D. Help the professor find a way to the hidden treasure.
PLAYSTATION

\$49.99

Jaleco

Brahma Force

E. Mankind is faced with annihilation. Only you can save all humanity.
PLAYSTATION

\$29.99

Ubi Soft

F1 Pole Position

F. Experience the fast paced challenge of the Formula One racing circuit.
NINTENDO 64

\$74.99

Sierra

Nascar

G. The hottest, most true-to-life racing game.
PLAYSTATION

\$39.99

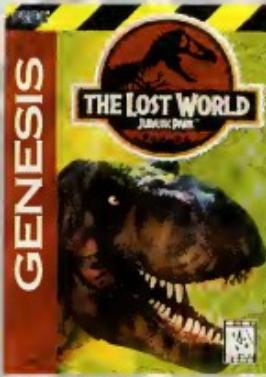
Where else but on-line! www.cbworld.com

SEGA

SEGA

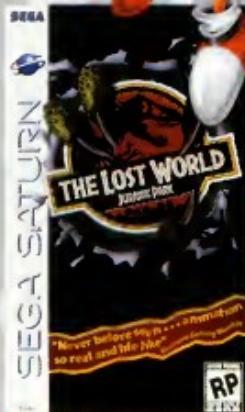


A.



GENESIS

C. \$49.99



SEGA SATURN

C. \$49.99

electronics
boutique®

Call 1-800-800-5166 for the store nearest you!



SEGA SATURN

R.P.
ESRB

SEGA
Sonic R
Refurbished System

A. Three raging 32-bit processors work overtime for speed and intensity.
SATURN

\$119.99



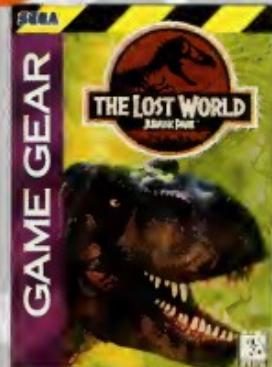
SEGA
Sonic R

B. A super sonic racing extravaganza that's dizzying.
SATURN

\$49.99

SEGA
The Lost World

C. Survive on a mysterious island with over 20 species of dinosaurs.
SATURN/GENESIS/GAME GEAR

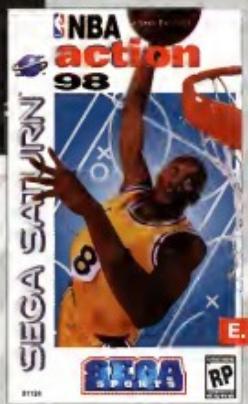
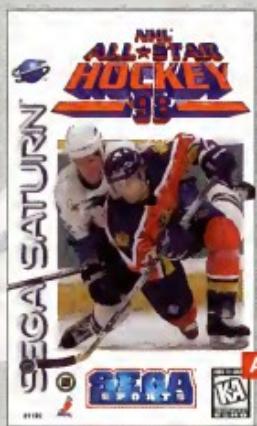


GAME GEAR

C. \$34.99

SEGA

SEGA
SB



Where else but on-line! www.cbworld.com

EB

Video Games

**Exclusive
Figure!**
With purchase of
Street Fighter EX
while supplies last



A.

INCLUDES
RESIDENT EVIL 2
INTERACTIVE
DEMO

B.

Trade in
Resident Evil 1 and
get Resident Evil
Director's Cut for
Only \$19.99!



C.



D.

Capcom
**Street
Fighter EX**
A. The screen explodes in
3-D with new special moves.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99

Interplay
**Clay
Fighter 63 1/3**
B. Combines humor
with in-depth gameplay.
NINTENDO 64
\$74.99

Capcom
**Resident Evil
Director's Cut**
B. Face your fear in this
masterpiece of horror.
PLAYSTATION
\$39.99

Interplay
**Clay Fighter
Extreme**
E. The game that
combines humor with
gameplay.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99

Capcom
Resident Evil
C. Battle ghouly
zombies, monstrous
spiders and snakes.
SATURN
\$49.99

Interplay
**Jimmy Johnson
VR Football '98**
F. Bone crunching tackles
and over the shoulder
receptions, much more.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99

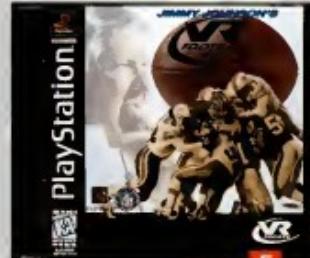


D.

Interplay
Red Asphalt
G. Completely unique
racing with scorching
weapons.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99



E.



F.



G.

electronics
boutique®

Call 1-800-800-5166 for the store nearest you!

Video Games

EB

PlayStation



A.



B.

PlayStation



C.

PlayStation



D.

GT Interactive
Oddworld

A. A stunning, feature-film quality world.
PLAYSTATION

\$49.99

GT Interactive
Duke Nukem 64

B. Bigger and badder than ever. Lots of new weapons!
NINTENDO64/PLAYSTATION

\$74.99 / 49.99

GT Interactive
Bugriders

C. Racing, flying, shooting, all on a giant bug.
PLAYSTATION

\$49.99

ASC
Onc

D. Live or die by your state of rage and momentum.
PLAYSTATION

\$49.99

ASC
Mass Destruction

E. 24 earth shattering levels, with 4 treacherous 3D battlefields.
PLAYSTATION/SATURN

\$49.99

ASC
TNN Motor Sports Hardcore 2

F. Rampage through 8 new hardcore tracks.
PLAYSTATION

\$49.99

ASC
Ten Pin Alley

G. Pro bowling precision and pin crashing fun.
SATURN

\$49.99

PlayStation



E.



PlayStation



F.

SEGA SATURN



G.



Where else but on-line! www.cbworld.com

SB

Video Games



A.



B.



C.



E.



Namco
Treasures of the Deep

D. Over the top action
deep under the sea.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99

Eidos Interactive
Tomb Raider II

E. Lara Croft is back on
another exotic adventure.
PLAYSTATION
\$54.99

Eidos Interactive
Deathtrap Dungeon

H. The ultimate hack
and slash thriller!
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99

Eidos Interactive
Fighting Force

G. Unparalleled action
and hundreds of attack
moves.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99



F.



G.

electronics
boutique

Call 1-800-800-5166 for the store nearest you!

Video Games

EB



A.



B.



C.



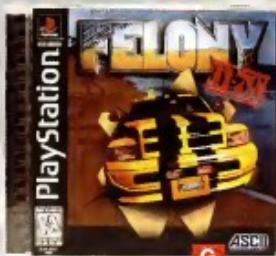
D.



E.



F.



G.



H.

Virgin Interactive
Hercules

A. Think you have what it takes to be a hero? Prove it.
PLAYSTATION

\$49.99

Malofim
Jersey Devil

E. He needs a sidekick and you're it!
PLAYSTATION

\$49.99

Fox Video
Croc

F. The crusading crocodile needs your help to save his friends!
PLAYSTATION

\$49.99

Virgin Interactive
NHL Power Play '98

C. Superior 3-D graphics and in-your-face moves.
PLAYSTATION

\$49.99

Asci
Felony II-79

G. Destructive driving game, armed with a full arsenal of 22 cars.
PLAYSTATION

\$49.99

Virgin Interactive
Golden Nugget

D. Completely realistic Las Vegas gambling.
PLAYSTATION

\$49.99

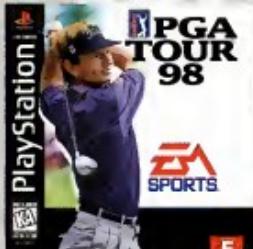
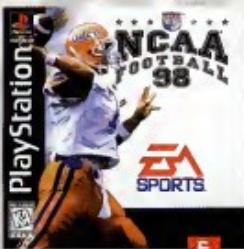
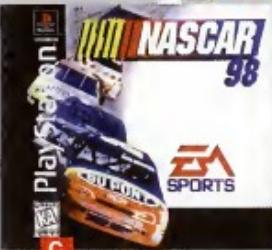
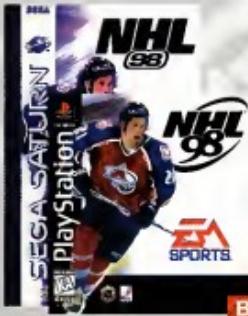
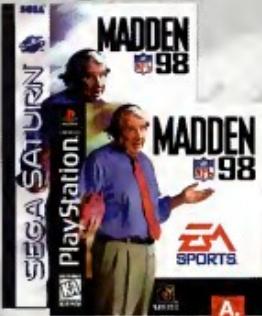
Asci
Clock Tower

H. Sheer terror abounds in this intense horror adventure game.
PLAYSTATION

\$49.99

SB

Hot Hits From Electronics Arts



Electronic Arts
Madden '98

A. Take football to
the highest level.
PLAYSTATION/SATURN
\$49.99 EACH

Electronic Arts
NHL '98
B. The smartest, fastest
hockey game in the world.
PLAYSTATION/SATURN
\$49.99 EACH

Electronic Arts
Nascar '98
C. Captures the essence
of America's #1 motorsport.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99

Electronic Arts
NBA Live '98
D. Power slams, Power
moves, Power gameplay.
PLAYSTATION/SATURN
\$49.99 EACH

Electronic Arts
**NCAA
Football '98**
E. An authentic college
football environment.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99

Electronic Arts
PGA Tour '98

F. Compete against the
best on the PGA Tour's
ampionship courses.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99

Electronic Arts
**Jurassic Park 2:
The Lost World**
G. Survive on a mysterious
island with tons of dinosaurs.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99

Electronic Arts
**Madden
Football 64**
H. Madden's legendary
gameplay comes to
NINTENDO 64.
NINTENDO 64
\$64.99

Electronic Arts
Nuclear Strike
J. Race against time to
stop a major nuclear threat.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99

electronics
boutique®

Call 1-800-800-5166 for the store nearest you!

Video Games

CB



A.



B.



C.



D.



F.



E.

THQ
Ghost in the Shell

A. Futuristic cyber world where technology has gone wild.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99

THQ
V

B. "Survival of the fittest" on the streets and playgrounds of America.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99

Activision
Car & Driver's Grand Tour Racing

C. See the world at 200 MPH in sports car, rally-style, and off-road races.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99

Activision
Nightmare Creatures

D. Explore the streets of London brimming with the vilest of creatures.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99

Konami
International Superstar Soccer 64

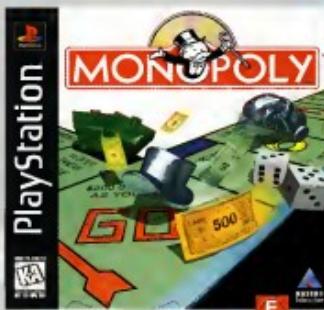
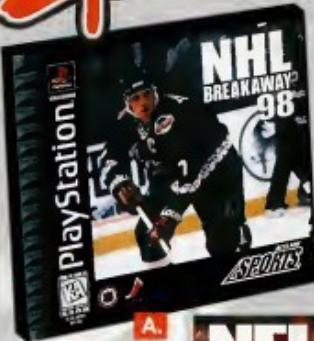
E. It'll leave you dripping with sweat and screaming for more.
NINTENDO 64
\$69.99

Konami
Castlevania Symphony of the Night

F. Alucard, half-human/half-vampire, strives to end the vampire bloodline.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99

EB

Video Games



Acclaim
Extreme G

D. Futuristic combat racing
played across 12 tracks.
NINTENDO 64

\$69.99

Hasbro Interactive
Monopoly

E. Get ready to wheel and
deal on the boardwalk.
PLAYSTATION

\$39.99

Hasbro Interactive
**Beast Wars
Transformers**

F. Battle with the heroic
Maximals for control of the
Universe.
PLAYSTATION

\$39.99

Hasbro Interactive
Frogger

G. Frogger, he's the
coolest amphibian in town.
PLAYSTATION

\$39.99

Acclaim
**NHL
Breakaway 98**

A. Detailed 3-D graphics
for total team management.
PLAYSTATION

\$49.99

Acclaim
Turok

B. Set in the Lost Land,
Turok must defeat the
archvillain, Campaigner.
NINTENDO 64

\$69.99

Acclaim
**NFL Quarterback
Club**

C. All 30 NFL teams
and over 1500 players.
NINTENDO 64

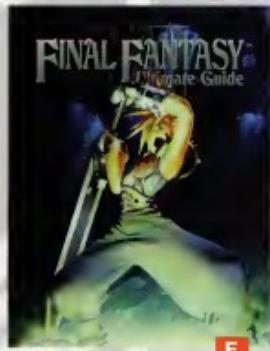
\$74.99



electronics
boutique Call 1-800-800-5166 for the store nearest you!

Video Game Accessories

EB



Mad Catz Steering Wheel

A. Includes Analog brakes and accelerator pedals.
NINTENDO 64/
PLAYSTATION/SATURN

\$49.99

Mad Catz Dual Arcade Stick

B. An analog flight stick with extra action buttons.
NINTENDO 64/
PLAYSTATION

\$49.99

Samsung GXE TV

C. Intense screen graphics, adjustable bass-reflex speaker doors, stereo surround sound and a 15 watt sub-woofer.
Compatible with all video game systems.
13" SCREEN

\$199.99

AFTER \$20.00
MANUFACTURER REBATE

Reality Quest The Glove

D. Offers digital, analog and simulated analog control modes.
PLAYSTATION

\$89.99

Empire Publishing Final Fantasy VII Ultimate Guide

E. Hints, tips and strategies for Final Fantasy VII.
BOOK

\$9.99

Empire Publishing Tekken 3 Ultimate Guide

F. Conquer all your opponents with the ultimate Tekken 3 strategy guide.
BOOK

\$9.99

Where else but on-line! www.cbworld.com



SB INTERACT



TREMORPAK™

- Official N64 Vibration
- Works With N64 Controller
- Pick Select
- Adjustable vibration
- On/Off Switch
- Power Saving Mode



InterAct

ProgramPad

A. The clear choice for ultimate fight action control.
PLAYSTATION

\$29.99

Performance by InterAct
Tremor Pak N64

B. Experience every bump, hit and blast.
NINTENDO 64

\$14.99

InterAct

PiranhaPad

C. Raised control pad, slow-mo and auto-fire.
PLAYSTATION

\$14.99

InterAct

V3 Racing Wheel

D. Outperform the competition with 300 degree wheel rotation.
PLAYSTATION/N64

\$49.99

electronics

boutique

Call 1-800-800-5166 for the store nearest you!

INTERACT

EB



InterAct
SharkPad Pro 64

A. This transparent controller has it all.
NINTENDO 64

\$29.99

Performance by InterAct
Dual Fire Wireless Controller

B. Wireless gamepad for your video games and tv.
PLAYSTATION

\$49.99

InterAct
MakoPad

C. Attack with auto-fire, slow-mo, and extra long cord.
NINTENDO 64

\$29.99

Performance by InterAct
Mega Memory Card

D. Amazing 360 blocks of conventional memory.
PLAYSTATION

\$49.99

InterAct
15 Slot Memory Card

E. Copy and save your game position at any time.
PLAYSTATION

\$14.99

InterAct
EclipsePad

F. Get peak performance with turbo-fire, and more.
SATURN

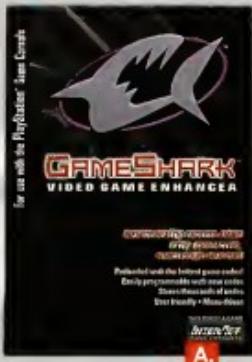
\$14.99

Where else but on-line! www.ebworld.com

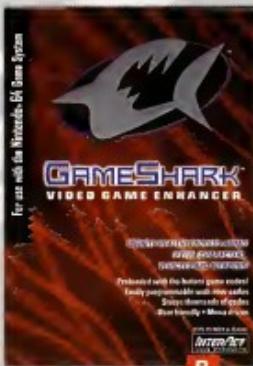


EB

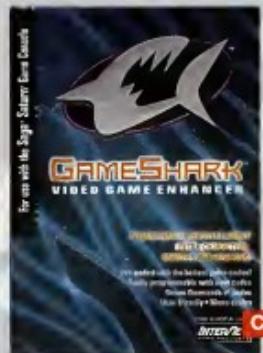
INTERACT



A.



B.



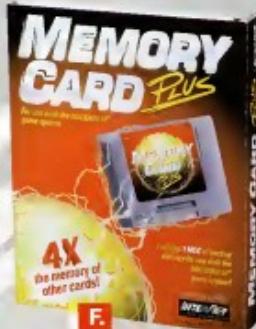
C.



D.



E.



F.

InterAct
GameShark
PlayStation

A. Dominate with this ultimate image enhancer.
PLAYSTATION
\$49.99

InterAct
GameShark
Nintendo 64

B. Take your gaming to new levels of excitement.
NINTENDO 64
\$49.99

InterAct
GameShark
Saturn

C. Play to the extreme with this game enhancer.
SATURN
\$49.99

Performance by InterAct
CD
Game/Memory Card Case

D. Holds all your game system necessities!
PLAYSTATION
\$14.99

Performance by InterAct
Portable Game System Case

E. Protect your portable game system on the road.
PLAYSTATION
\$9.99

InterAct
Nintendo 64
Memory Card Plus

F. Take a break from your game with our easy to use memory card.
NINTENDO 64
\$24.99

electronics
boutique®

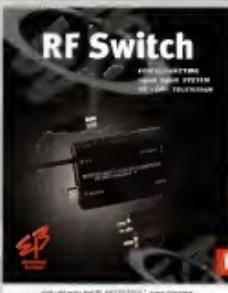
Call 1-800-800-5166 for the store nearest you!

EB Accessories

EB



A.



B.



C.



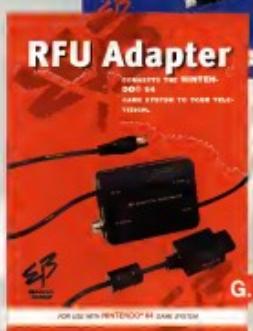
D.



E.



F.



G.



H.

GamePad

A. Replacement controller for your PlayStation®.
PLAYSTATION

\$9.99

RF Switch

B. Connect your PlayStation® to your TV or VCR without an audio/video connector.
PLAYSTATION

\$14.99

Mega Memory Card

C. Save and copy your game positions at any time.
PLAYSTATION

\$49.99

SuperPad

D. Replacement controller for Sega Genesis.
GENESIS

\$9.99

RF Switch

E. Connect your video game system to TV or VCR without audio/video connections.
UNIVERSAL

\$14.99

SuperPad

F. Replacement controller for your Super NES.
SNES

\$9.99

RFU Adapter

G. Connect to your TV with no video terminal.
NINTENDO 64

\$14.99

Memory Card

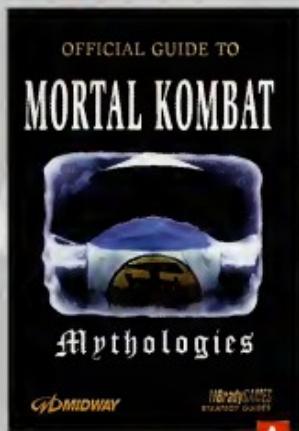
H. Save and copy your game positions at any time.
PLAYSTATION

\$14.99

Where else but on-line! www.ebwORLD.com

SB

Strategy Guides



THE OFFICIAL STRATEGY GUIDE



Macmillan Computer Publishing
Mortal Kombat Mythologies Official Guide

A. Blow-by-blow overview detailing non-stop fighting action MK fans expect.
BOOK

\$11.99

Macmillan Computer Publishing

Official Guide Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee

B. An amazing new style of interactive gaming.
BOOK

\$11.99

Macmillan Computer Publishing

Bushido Blade Official Guide

C. Tactics and strategies for all the character combos.
BOOK

\$11.99

Prima Publishing

GoldenEye 007 Official Guide

D. Your license to kill! This guide includes maps, tips and tricks to complete your mission.
BOOK

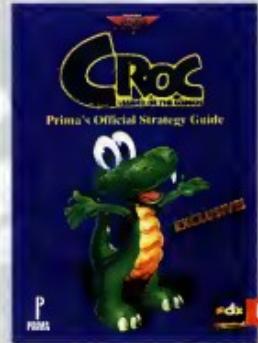
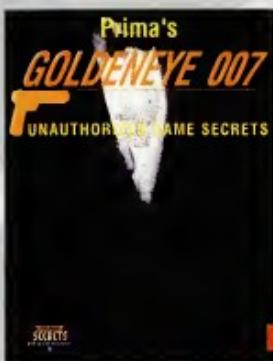
\$11.99

Prima Publishing

Croc Legends of the Gobbos

E. Puts you in control of a young, backpack-toting crocodile.
BOOK

\$12.99



electronics boutique Call 1-800-800-5166 for the store nearest you!

Video Games

CB



PlayStation

TEST DRIVE 4

A.



PlayStation

Ogre Battle

Limited Edition

Accolade

Test Drive 4

A. Modern sports cars challenge cars from the past.
PLAYSTATION

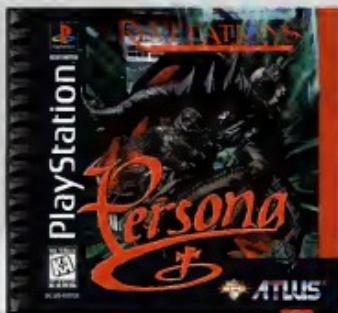
\$49.99

Atmos

Ogre Battle

B. Command your army through the Empire.
PLAYSTATION

\$54.99



PlayStation

PERSONA

Persona

C.



Dynasty Warriors

Koei

Dynasty Warriors

D. The fighting game with real history behind it.
PLAYSTATION

\$39.99

Koei

PTO II

E. From Pearl Harbor to unconditional surrender, this is your battlefield.

ALSO AVAILABLE FOR SNES \$39.99

SATURN

\$29.99



SEGA SATURN

PTO II



MRC

F.

Ocean
Multi Racing Championship

F. Buckle up and hold on for the ride of a lifetime.
NINTENDO 64

\$74.99

Where else but on-line! www.cbworld.com



Get Your Virtual Pets At EB!



Dino Rex · Funky Chick · Koinu · Mr. Dino · My Galaxy Pet · Pocket Chick · Pocket Turtle
\$9.99-\$19.99

**JOIN OUR
FREQUENT
BUYER CLUB
AND GET 5% OFF
EVERYTHING IN
THE STORE!***

- \$29.99 for a 1 year membership.
- Limit one video game hardware purchase per customer.
- Limit one discounted purchase per title.

*No dealers please. See store for details.

CALL 1-800-800-5166 FOR THE STORE NEAREST YOU!

www.ebworld.com

**WE
GUARANTEE
THE LOWEST
PRICES!
Ask Your Sales
Associate About Our
Price Match Policy.**

EB

**electronics
boutique®**

Tetrisphere Nintendo 64 NFL GameDay '98 PlayStation PaRappa the Rapper PlayStation Creatures PC Last Bronx Saturn X-COM: Apocalypse PC Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha PlayStation IF-22 Raptor PC

finals

Don't waste your money — read this first

189 Nintendo 64

189 PlayStation

196 Saturn

199 PC

208 Macintosh

Next Generation's Star Guides provide a quick way to get our general impression of a game. But unless you read the review, you're only getting half the story. To get all the information you need to know before making a purchasing decision, read the whole review; don't stop at the stars.

★★★★★ Revolutionary
Brilliantly conceived and flawlessly executed; a new high watermark.

★★★★ Excellent
A high-quality and inventive new game. Either a step forward for an existing genre or a successful attempt at creating a new one.

★★ Good
A solid and competitive example of an established game style.

★★ Average
Perhaps competent — certainly uninspired.

★ Bad
Crucially flawed in design or application.

Denotes a review appearing on the Next Generation Disc.

Denotes a review of a Japanese product.

Tetrisphere Publisher: Nintendo Developer: H2O

The puzzle game finally makes an appearance on Nintendo 64 in the form of Tetrisphere, a game that has been in development for several years and was originally slated for release on Asian jaguar. Players familiar with existing Tetris titles won't really have a frame of reference for Tetrisphere, other than that tetris pieces are still patterns of four blocks. In Tetrisphere, the player drops matching pieces to dig through layers of tetris pieces that surround a white growing orb.

One of the reasons Tetris was a huge hit was its simplicity; Tetrisphere is anything but simple. It takes quite a bit of playing around to master the basics of gameplay. Despite this, Tetrisphere is fun

Single-player games have several modes to choose from. In Hide and Seek and Rescue, players dig to the core of the sphere to reveal an image or rescue a "little buddy." Puzzle mode, however, is the most ridiculous and interesting of the single-player games. Here, the player has a set combination of cross and moves to



Play hide-and-seek with your little buddy in the surprisingly complex game Tetrisphere

eliminate the tetris pieces on the sphere. Surprisingly, Tetrisphere is most successful as a two-player game, similar in feel to Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo. Two spheres are set up side by side — as pieces are removed from one player's sphere, they're dropped onto the opponent's side.

Graphically, Tetrisphere doesn't live up to most other Nintendo 64 games — the most obvious flaw is an annoying pop-up as the player rotates the globe. However, on the music side, H2O does provide some of the best tracks on any N64 title, with nearly a dozen different tunes to choose from.

Nintendo 64 is known for very puzzle title, and Tetrisphere fits the bill. Although it has flaws, the game should serve to steal away many gameless hours, especially in two-player mode.

Rating: ★★★

PlayStation

Abe's Oddysee Publisher: GT Interactive Developer: Oddworld

2D is dead — or is it? The people over at Oddworld have thumbed their nose at the rest of the development community that is seemingly never without some reason for doing the next texture-mapped 3D shooter. However, it's a righteous defiance. The truth is, as unimpressive as Abe's Oddysee is in terms of technology — and to a large extent, gameplay — it's still one of the deepest, most involving, and most cleverly designed games ever released on PlayStation.

Players take control of Abe, an outstandingly designed character in an interesting, original world. Abe possesses a host of possible actions and interactions through what the designers at Oddworld call "gameplay." Gamespeak allows Abe to cower in a limited fashion with the other inhabitants of Oddworld in an effort to save his fellow Mudokons from being turned into lunch by the evil meat-packing conglomerate, Rupture Farms. Of course, Abe can also run, jump, climb, and perform most other feats common (plus a few that aren't so common) to a side-scrolling character, all of which are



Abe's Oddysee from Oddworld shows there may be some life left in 2D gameplay after all

among the most smoothly animated movements we've ever seen. The result is a game that is extremely reminiscent of Delphine's classic Flashback and, before that, Jordan Mechner's Prince of Persia, but with far better character design and control, as well as deeper puzzles.

Action gamers are likely to be disappointed by the occasionally slow pace, but speed is traded for a considerably more cerebral set of challenges that require a great amount of persistence, observation, and thought. Puzzles generally involve getting past difficult obstacles by stealth (hiding, hiding in shadows), possessing others (there's a nifty sell for using other life

forms' weapons and abilities), or simply navigating difficult passes. Enter way once players have worked through the first twenty minutes, which serve as a training ground, the level of challenge increases dramatically; however, thanks to features such as infinite lives and the ability to both pick up immediately where you died and save at any time, the game rarely becomes frustrating.

Along with an engaging and motivating story is brought to life through outstanding voice acting and narration in conjunction with adequately directed, pre-rendered FMV. Sure, it isn't polygons, but Abe's Oddysee is still the be-all and end-all of its chosen style of 2D gameplay.

Rating: ★★★★

Ace Combat 2 Publisher: Namco Developer: Namco

Sequel There are a million of them, and it's a sad fact that a lot of the time they're the same old same old in a shiny, new package. Fortunately, that's not the case with Ace Combat 2. In fact, it's exactly the opposite.

The first Ace Combat (titled Air Combat in the US) wasn't all that great,

rating**PlayStation**

but it was as close to a "real" flight sim as anyone had ever seen on PlayStation, and it duly impressed a lot of people. Ace Combat 2 is going to impress a lot of folks too, but for slightly different reasons.

First, AC2's graphics are simply nothing short of fantastic. Everything is smooth and fast, and just check the explosions — you won't find nastier explosions anywhere, short of setting off an M-80 while holding on to it. Drop a load of incendiaries, and it looks like the real deal.

But the game isn't just eye candy. The enemy AI is sharp. Maybe too sharp. Players who don't pay a lot of attention to what's going on will quickly find hostiles on their six who know exactly what to do with a heat-seeking missile. In fact, in some of the ground attack missions, the enemy combat air patrols are so focused that just getting past them alive will become the crux of the



Get them before they get you!
Ace Combat 2 is a garden of deadly delights

mision, let alone bombing the target.

One really sweet option is the game's compatibility with the Sony dual analog joystick. It can be set up for either left- or right-handers, and it lets the pilot use one stick for guidance and weapons and the other for the throttle, pretty much the way it is in actual fighters.

With more than twenty planes to fly, thirty death-defying missions (most with branching mission paths), and complete support for Sony's dual analog joystick, Ace Combat 2 should keep a whole bunch of weekend warriors strapped in to the TV.

Rating: ★★★★



Fox's croc is left stumbling in the dark and in the wake of greater games

Croc: the Legend of the Gobbos
Publisher: Fox Interactive
Developer: Argonaut

rehearsed in production. Unfortunately, somewhere along the way, the crafty mascot candidate has lost some of his shine by way of compromise.

Graphically, Croc is a technical wonder, sporting some of the smoothest polygons and animation this side of N64. The fact that

PlayStation

Pay dirt

Sony delivers the best football game on the planet

NFL GameDay '98

Publisher: Sony Computer Entertainment
Developer: Sony Interactive Studios

Ever since the launch of PlayStation, GameDay has been the absolute best-playing football game available, year in and year out. However, when Madden returned last year, it took the immediate market-share lead. Not because it was a better game, but because it had a bigger name. If the same thing happens again this year, then there is a serious problem with the game-buying public.

The developers of GameDay '98 make up one of the rare teams that really gets it. Last year, GameDay '97 was simply the best-playing football game, with spot-on control and game mechanics that made even

the toughest plays seem within reach — with practice. Sony could have easily slapped a '98 on the box, updated the rosters, and called it a day — and gotten away with it. Instead, the developers just went back to work, creating an unbelievable polygon engine and tuning the gameplay even further so players of all levels could enjoy a game of rare pleasure. While Madden is still trying to old school clone right in the 32-bit age, Sony has, for the third year in a row, successfully reinvented the wheel and made it spin.

The polygon players allow for several advances over previous football games. The most obvious improvement is the game's graphics, since the polygons allow for texture-mapped uniforms, complete with the proper logos and numbers. The animation is excellent, and the players look great when running, tackling, diving, passing, catching, blocking, and just about everything else. More important, however, is the depth the 3D engine brings



The grappling tackles are a tip of the hat to last year's Quarterback Club, but GameDay '98 has perfected them



This real 3D space allows players to run through holes as opposed to always having to run outside

to gameplay. Since the polygonal players occupy 3D space, they cease to feel like simple points of contact, but rather more like real physical bodies to work around. This is especially significant in the running game, which GameDay '98 does better than any football game around.

The only knocks on GameDay '98 are an incomplete (and sometimes inaccurate) star engine and an AI that seems to be basically the same as the one from last year. However, that still means the AI is far and away the best in the business.

In the end there is no denying that GameDay is the best football game series around, more impressive still when you consider that it continues to evolve, season after season. Sony has simply done it right.

Rating: ★★★★★

rating

PlayStation

Argonaut (16-bit developers of Starfox) was able to pull off this feat on a supposedly less powerful system is a strong testament to the untapped possibilities of PlayStation. The way he waddles, runs, sidesteps, and dangles provides the kind of precision control that made Lara Croft a gameplay goddess. But in the race against such revolutionary competitors, Croc trips over his own aggressive enthusiasm.

While looks and control weigh heavily in favor of the title, gameplay seems to lag a few notches behind. Repetitive and overly simplified level designs seem to pitch Croc squarely to gamers under the age of 12. The noticeably infrequent enemy encounters also cause the game to teeter back and forth across the line, dividing eye candy from real gameplay. After a few hours, most players will be left wondering where the designers hid the rest of the game; in the end, the game provides just enough pretty, pointless entertainment to keep gamers

satisfied, but there's not enough challenge to certify Croc a niche next to the classics it so readily seeks to emulate. It's just enough to avoid having its name used against it.

Rating: ★★★

Fantastic 4

Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Probe

Despite all the talk about the "new" Acclaim, someone seems to have let an "old" Acclaim title slip through (and equal shame on Sony's third-party, "quality control" approval personnel, who were clearly sound asleep when this came across their desks). Like the worst of Acclaim's licensed games for the last eight years, the one takes a venerable piece of pop-culture property, in this case Stan Lee's Fantastic 4, and reduces it to dismal side-scrolling action — using "action" in the loosest sense of the word.

Up to four people can be tortured



Fantastic 4 looks terrible and plays worse — there's no excuse for this

at once by this travesty as they move across the screen from left to right, controlling big, disjointed sprite characters in the classic (read tired) Final Fight style. The only concession to innovation is that players scale as they move into and out of the scene, but there's so little sense of depth that it's nearly impossible to tell when a player is lined up with a potential target, especially with the larger boss creatures.

Control is nonexistent, the music sounds like it was stolen from a '70s pom film, and every character and enemy is so poorly modeled and animated that it must have taken all of a single weekend to finish the graphics. Pretty much the only fun we found in the game was making the Fantastic 4 use their ridiculous-looking super moves ("dance" to the music — although at that point, it was a little like making jokes at the scene of a traffic accident). Dismal art + dismal graphics + dismal gameplay + dismal level design = dismal sound = dismal game.

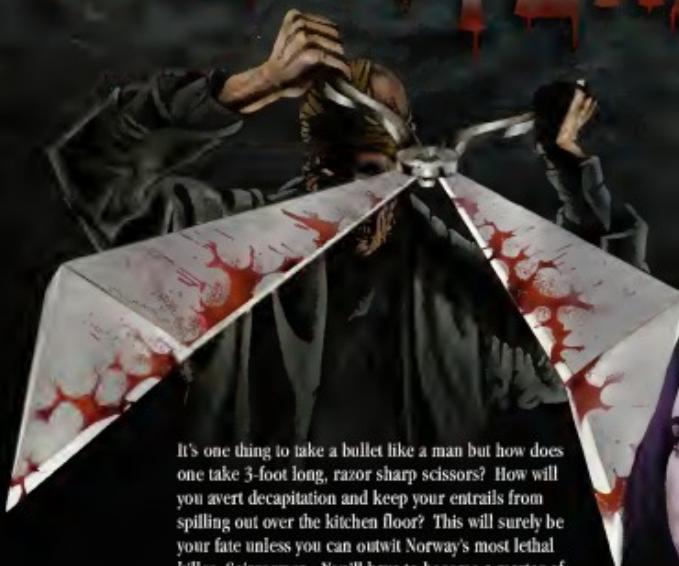
Before we give Fantastic 4 its one star, we'd like to apologize to the other games we've given one star. Most of them are merely terrible and don't deserve to be grouped with the likes of this kind of calculated deception. Note to Acclaim: if you're trying to revamp your image, the first step is to quit knowingly trying to sell gamers such complete, user, useless crap. This is not a game. This is an insult.

Rating: *

The upside:
WENCHES.
The downside:
THE PLANK.



SHEAR TERROR



It's one thing to take a bullet like a man but how does one take 3-foot long, razor sharp scissors? How will you avert decapitation and keep your entrails from spilling out over the kitchen floor? This will surely be your fate unless you can outwit Norway's most lethal killer—Scissorman. You'll have to become a master of stealth and deception to avoid being cut to ribbons in this blood-soaked horror adventure.

- Five playable characters and ten different endings for super-extended replay value.
- Amazingly detailed, horrific graphics and special effects.
- Bone-chilling sound effects.

So grab your copy of *Clock Tower™*, turn out the lights, and pray.

CLOCK TOWER

PlayStation

Ghost in the Shell

Publisher: T3HQ
Developer: Exact

Undoubtedly, many players are going to buy *Ghost in the Shell* purely because they're fans of the anime it's based on, and they won't be disappointed, especially since the game has ten minutes of new anime footage. However, a few minutes of *Fifth* is handily not the only reason to pick up *Ghost*. Simply, this is a good game.

Loosely based on Masamune Shirow's anime and manga, *Ghost in the Shell* is a pure third-person action shooter in the strictest sense of the word. The entire game is spent controlling a Futochima, or spider tank, equipped with bullets, grenades, and rockets. It's highly maneuverable, and can walk up walls and across ceilings, which results in some very interesting level designs.

Developed by Exact, the same team that made the *Jumping Flash!* games for Sony, the company was



Ghost in the Shell may have little to do with the movie, but it is a solid shooter

picked by Shirow himself for the job. *Ghost* is as far from *Jumping Flash!* in style as a game can get, yet it still manages to retain some of the same feeling, particularly that odd freezing sensation experienced while piloting Robot.

While the twelve levels do provide interesting variations on the same theme, such as time limits and foot-to-ceiling gymnastics, as with all shooters the game begins to feel tedious after a

while. Perhaps more vehicles or the ability to change from third to first person would've helped curb the monotony.

As it is, though, *Ghost in the Shell* is a fast and fun game that also happens to have a great license attached to it.

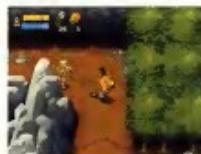
Rating: ★★★

Herc's Adventures

Publisher: LucasArts
Developer: LucasArts

With the number of Star Wars titles LucasArts has been pumping out as of late, it's refreshingly surprising to find a game like Herc's Adventures being released. Blending classic gameplay with downright hilarity, *Herc's Adventures* has succeeded in making sprite-based games seem not so dated.

The setting is ancient Greece, and Persephone has been kidnapped by the lord of the underworld, Hades. Consequently, things have become rather unpleasant topside, so it's decided she



The perspective in *Herc's Adventures* makes it difficult to enjoy the humor

should be rescued. It may be called *Herc's Adventures*, but there are three characters available to play as: the aforementioned Hercules, a young but spry Jason (of *Jason and the Argonauts* fame), and the underdressed Atlanta (each has his or her own strengths and weaknesses, which greatly affect gameplay).

Humor plays a large part in *Herc's* and is in fact an integral element of gameplay. Health is restored by eating



The salt spray hits your lips as you look into the deep blue. The frigate creaks and the plank bobs. Will this be the end? Welcome to *Shipwreckers!*, life on the high seas at its swash-buckling best. Wield flame throwers and hurl lightning bolts as you man cannons and command great vessels under the Jolly Roger. Battle one to five other players. The rewards are great, the puzzles daunting and the excitement high—just watch your step. The plank is a cruel mistress.

Visit www.psycow.com and enter the Shipwreckers! Treasure Quest Sweepstakes.



Shipwreckers! and the Psyco logo are trademarks of Psyco Inc. ©1997 Psyco Inc. All rights reserved. The PlayStation logo and "PlayStation" are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The rating icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

rating

PlayStation

All that



Throughout the game, you'll run into various styles of rapping that you'll have to contend with and master in pure Simon Says fashion.

PaRappa the Rapper

Publisher: SCEA
Developer: SCEI

In an attempt to quell the clamor among avid PlayStation import enthusiasts and further its goal of providing a console software library of infinite depth, Sony has finally released the Japanese hit, PaRappa the Rapper, Stateside. The rapping mascot took the Japanese market by storm, selling well more than 700,000 units and successfully propelling an

"ahemame" approach to videogaming into the mainstream.

The game itself consists mainly of a series of interactive cut scenes, evenly connected by interactive segments. Following the hip and cutesy storyline, with character designs by children's illustrator Rodney Greenblatt, you play as PaRappa, a hip-hop canine out to win over the girl of his dreams, a flower named Sunny Funny. The interactive segments challenge the gamer to follow an unplayable character's "rap" in Simon Says style using various buttons on the controller for different words and phrases, keeping the beat so PaRappa correctly repeats each verse. While this style of control and play is not at all as easy as it sounds, it is simple. The fact that each scene changes slightly depending on how successful the player is and also that a special ending can be uncovered for mastering the controls and keeping the "rap meter" at "U rappin' Cool" adds a sliver of depth to an otherwise linear experience.

But if the genuine thrill of playing PaRappa isn't necessarily derived from gameplay, why is the

Pop culture meets PlayStation with PaRappa



Man.... If only I had a car
and a license.....

The cinemas lie at the crux of PaRappa, making the overall journey from the game's beginning to end one enjoyable ride.



PaRappa seems aimed at becoming the motto gurus for the late '90s videogame generation with his saying: "I gotta believe!"

game so good? After all, any game that presents itself as more fashion than function (which PaRappa does) should easily fall into a ratings category with mediocre, uncreative titles.

But that's just it. PaRappa is fiercely creative, presenting itself so seamlessly it manages to irresistibly draw the gamer into a highly novel, unapologetically 2D cartoon world, populated with onion-headed karate teachers and cake-baking chickens. It's incredibly hard not to find the silly hip parody elements humorous, and it's equally difficult not to notice the painstaking aesthetic perfection that has been layered into the colorful and flawless cinemas segments, the insanely catchy soundtrack, and the perfectly paced character development. The game is so well-produced and carried out that you won't even notice that the gameplay itself is based on the most primitive of concepts. Simply put, style over substance has never been better done than in PaRappa.

Certainly, more than a few PlayStation owners will find PaRappa boring, pointless, and completely inept. But the truth of the matter is, PaRappa the Rapper is a game that must be played to be fully comprehended, enjoyed, and valued, if not for its contribution to general videogaming, then for the link it forges between the videogame industry and pop culture novelty at large. It's beyond recommended.

Rating: ★★★★

PlayStation

gins (it's Greece, remember?), while houses and stray sheep can be picked up and thrown as projectile weapons. And, in a very shiny-like touch, there's even an inflatable cow decoy.

With fourteen worlds and forty levels, ranging from Egypt to Sparta and every Mediterranean locale in between, there's a lot of game in Herc's Adventures. However, humor and size can't completely carry a game. Herc's suffers from an almost too rigid gameplay style, which consists mostly of walking around and hitting wave upon wave of enemies. Plus, the skewed 3D perspective makes it sometimes difficult to tell where players can and cannot go.

However, with its lighthearted nature and ability to not take itself too seriously, Herc's Adventures provides a satisfying diversion from the plethora of dark and gritty games on the market.

Rating: ★★★

Madden '98

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: Tiburon

EA's most coveted franchise has seen its share of controversy over the last few years. Madden '96 was a no-show, then Madden '97 ate up its commercial success with flaws. Now with Madden '98, EA is trying to put its game back on top. Unfortunately, while the developers at Tiburon were trying to work out the bugs from last year's engine, the developers at Sony were busy creating the first truly polygonal football game. Therefore, before the first snap was ever taken, Madden '98 was already

behind the competition.

Even a quick comparison of screenshots shows that GameDay '98 looks like a 32-bit game while Madden '98 more closely resembles its 16-bit heritage. Until GameDay came along, the graphics and play in Madden were the best around. Sadly, not anymore.

On the field, Madden '98 is essentially the same as the series has always been, which is part blessing and part curse. The control is slippery, the play is fast, and yes, once again, there are many days — the kind that work every time against any team or defense. The defensive AI (it's likes to call it "Liquid AI") — as opposed to what? "Solid AI"? — is an improvement over last year, but still falls short. The biggest disappointment is the running game, which is nonexistent thanks to the complete lack of precise control and poor blocking. Since there's no reason to run on a play, every game turns into a quarterback shoot-out, with QBs often getting more than 600 yards passing in a game and that's with five-minute quarters! Ridiculous.

The Madden series continues to excel in its presentation, stats, and options. No game has a more complete stat engine or comprehensive list of options, but as always, a game is judged by how it looks, and most important, how it plays. Grimed, despite some problems, at least the gameplay is solid — a distinct improvement over last year. However, it's too little too late, and stacked against the jaw-dropping GameDay, good is no longer good enough.

This particular dynasty has passed.

Rating: ★★★



At one point EA Sports' Madden '98 was the football game every fan dreamed of. Too bad Sony showed there's a better way.



MLB '98 looks good and plays well. In fact, there's nothing wrong with it, there's just very little that's new, interesting, or exciting.

MLB '98

Publisher: Sony Computer Entertainment
Developer: Sony Interactive Studios

The series formerly known as MLB Pennant Race has dropped a good portion of its lengthy moniker and much of the baggage that came with it. Last year, Pennant Race was nothing more than a poor 32-bit imitation of the classic Genesis game, World Series Baseball. To top it all off, the game didn't even come out until the very end of the baseball season. However, MLB '98 has taken a new approach, and while it still has a ways to go, it's definitely on the right track.

The game has moved to polygonal players, and the texture-mapped models are the best looking of any baseball game. On the other hand, the 3D stadiums in MLB are the worst of any 32-bit baseball game, although they are much more realistic in size than the tiny fields seen in Xplosive Play '98.

The gameplay in MLB '98 is a hybrid set of features culled from several other games. Once again the batting and pitching interface works nearly identically to MSN on Genesis. In the field the game actually plays a lot like Triple Play '98, with a speed burst at the fielder's disposal. However, the one area in which MLB '98 excels more than any other PlayStation baseball game is the speed of play — finally a baseball game in which the player doesn't have to wait thirty seconds between batters.

There's no denying that MLB '98 is a good, solid baseball game that surpasses Triple Play '98 in many respects.

However, in the grander scheme of console baseball, MLB '98 does nothing to advance the genre and can't even clean the cleats of Sega's World Series Baseball '98 for Saturn.

Rating: ★★★

Porsche Challenge

Publisher: SCEA
Developer: SCEE

Whenever hype precedes a game, the end result will almost always be a little disappointing. No game, no matter how good, can live up to the godlike status bestowed upon it by months of anticipation and excitement. Porsche Challenge, which was released in Europe earlier this year, built up quite a head of steam before it finally landed on US shores. But to and to add fuel, this one almost lived up to the buzz.

It may seem like a novel idea to have an entire game based solely on Porsche boosters, but any user that insists on having just one kind of car, no matter how cool, had better have a few tricks up its sleeve. Thankfully Porsche Challenge does. The presence of six different drivers, each with a unique driving style, takes care of the problem of having just one kind of car. While there are only four tracks, the first being Stuttgart, Porsche's actual test track, the rest have side roads and shortcuts that open up as players progress, ensuring a good amount of replayability.

Replay plays a large part in Porsche Challenge, from the accurate car models, rendered from Porsche blueprints, to the relentlessly difficult handling. Some gamers who are familiar

rating**PlayStation**

The graphics in Porsche Challenge are slick and polished, much like the racers themselves.

with the arcade physics of games like *Ridge Racer* may find the control hard to handle, but then they'd probably also find actual boosters hard to handle at high speeds.

Porsche Challenge suffers when it comes to its split-screen mode. There's no external view since the cars were too big to include onscreen and have a decent frame rate. There's enough pop-up in the two-player as it is. However, this is a minor quibble. Like *PlayStation's* excellent *Formula 1*, which also stressed simulation over arcade, *Challenge* has chosen to take a road less traveled, and screens over it.

Rating: ★★★★

Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha

Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Ariake

When we gave the arcade version of *Street Fighter EX* two stars back in **NG 27**, the game deserved it. The animation was poor, the graphics blurry, and generally it didn't feel like a *Street Fighter* game at all. But Ariake has saved the day, adding thirteen new characters,

all kinds of extras (Training Mode, Team Battle, etc.), and generally making the game feel right.

To call *Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha* a 3D game is, however, somewhat misleading. It plays just like any (or all) of the 2D SF games, seen squarely from the side, with no movement into or out of the screen. But it is presented in beautifully detailed polygons. The new characters animate just as well as any from *Tekken 2*, and Capcom and Ariake have made them very payable and distinct.

The game is very similar to *Tekken* graphically, but it replaces *Tekken's* multi-part throws and excessive combos with the traditional special moves found in the SF series. Ite Ryu and Ken's Dragon Punch and Guile's Flash Kick translate remarkably well to the new engine. The exceptions are the big characters, Zangief and Denji, who look awful, although they are still extremely well-animated.

The game's best feature, however, is the Expert Training Mode. Each character is presented with seven moves or combos of increasing difficulty. For each combo performed successfully a second character is moved a point closer to being unlocked. This is not only a great way to release secret characters, but it encourages players to learn new techniques and provides a challenge to expert players.

With the current glut of bad 3D fighters, it's refreshing to know that Capcom can learn from its mistakes and make a *Virtua Fighter*-type improvement to an originally mediocre effort. While we wouldn't recommend continuing an ostensibly 3D series this way (i.e., not really 3D at all), *SFEX Plus Alpha* is an outstanding title even non-SF devotees will enjoy.

Rating: ★★★★



The polygonal characters in Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha are the sharpest around, with some real nice textures as well.

Saturn**Last Bronx**

Publisher: Sega of Japan
Developer: AM3

As Sega's last Model 2 fighter, and possibly the final Saturn 3D fighter by the time it arrives in the U.S., the aptly titled *Last Bronx* may well represent the end product of the company's 3D-bit evolution.

The game is a fusion of Virtua Fighter 2 and Fighting Vipers, with a decidedly Hobbesian weapon. Zambo may have the same number of polygons as Wolf, but his design is decidedly grittier. *Last Bronx* is populated with thugs, and the gameplay and move list follow the premise without so much as blinking. Weapons-based combat with VF response translation matches from static martial arts trials to short, neccy, and brutal struggles for survival. And, truthfully, it's kind of refreshing to be nasty and brutal.

Saturn's conversion team seems to have licked the FV cage problem by upping the resolution to VF2 level but dropping downsample shading. Unfortunately, the characters still flicker at close quarters, proof that the programmers didn't work as hard as



Am extra RAM cart adds a subtle visual flair to the Saturn version of Marvel Super Heroes

Marvel Super Heroes

Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom

For somebody else, a 2D fighting game is a death wish in disguise. For Capcom, it's a cash cow. The company has three successful franchises: *Street Fighter*, *Darkstalkers*, and *Marvel Super Heroes*. However, these franchises sell well because their designers know how to make a great game and not just push spines around onscreen.

Marvel Super Heroes is the second Marvel game to make it to Saturn. It improves upon *X-Men: Children of the Atom* by including the Infinity Gems, which originated from the Marvel Comics' *Infinity Gauntlet* miniseries. With special moves, each gem enhances the player's abilities; for instance, providing extra speed or armor. Like its predecessor, the game differs from the *Street Fighter* series because it uses huge sprays and two-level playing fields.

Technically, it's one of the few games left coming to America that works better on Saturn than PlayStation. VDP1's sprite-handling capabilities allow it to push the graphics onscreen better than on



Sony's platform. A RAM cart option lets the game use Sega's TMS RAM card to load in more frames of animation for significantly more detailed action, although at the expense of some speed.

Fortunately and unfortunately, *Marvel Super Heroes* caters to the fan base, not the game. The combat system is merely an incremental improvement upon *X-Men*, which was only slightly different from *Street Fighter X Alpha*, which was only slightly different from *Street Fighter II*. If it's a good system, but it's essentially the same game. Newcomers to the series should give it a spin, but veterans might want to wait until the *Alien vs. Predator* and *X-Men vs. Street Fighter* arrive at the end of the year.

Rating: ★★★★

REINFORCEMENTS HAVE ARRIVED

COMMAND & CONQUER
RED ALERT
FOR THE
PLAYSTATION™
GAME CONSOLE.

COMMAND
&
CONQUER

RED ALERT

COMING SOON TO RETAILERS EVERYWHERE OR CALL 1-800-874-4607



- Over two dozen Allied and Soviet missions on two action-packed CDs.
- Fight over land, sea and air with MiGs, spies, destroyers, submarines and more!
- Take the ultimate challenge by fighting up to 3 AI opponents in SKIRMISH mode.
- Battle maps are up to 2 times larger than those in Command & Conquer.
- Three game difficulty settings.
- Dozens of close-ups and action movies.
- Specially-designed interface with completely reworked graphics for your PlayStation™ Game Console.



LOCK 'N LOAD
Westwood
STUDIOS
www.westwood.com



Command & Conquer is a registered trademark of Westwood Studios Inc. Red Alert is a trademark of Westwood Studios Inc. © 1995 Westwood Studios Inc. An Allier Company. PlayStation and the PlayStation logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.



"SAY HELLO TO MY LITTLE FRIENDS"



AERO FIGHTERS ASSAULT



PARAGON ENTERTAINMENT™

YOU WANT TO BE A HERO?
DO OR DIE BODIES AND
BOSSSES OR GO HEAD-TO-
HEAD IN TWO-PLAYER COM-
BAT IN STUNNING GRAPHIC
ENVIRONMENTS TO SAVE
THE EARTH YET AGAIN.
THERE'S 10 LEVELS OF
FAST ACTION THAT
DEMANDS FAST REACTION.
JOIN THE BATTLE IN THE
ONLY GAME THAT MATTERS.

© 1997 Video System Co., U.M.Promotion Entertainment, Inc. Aero Fighters is a trademark of MOTRIVER, Inc. (Video System U.S.A., Inc.)
11151 Knoll Ave., Suite F, Cypress, CA 90630 Tel: (714)934-3356. Licensed by Nintendo. Nintendo, the Official Seal, Nintendo 64, the 3-D "N" logo, and
the Plumbie Pals are trademarks of Nintendo of America Inc. ©1996 Nintendo of America Inc.

rating

Saturn**Saturn Bomberman**

Publisher: Sega

Developer: Hudson Soft

Although still a relatively unknown entity to mainstream gamers, Super Bomberman 2 on SNES was considered by videogame enthusiasts to be one of the greatest multiplayer games ever created. So good, in fact, that it ranked No. 3 on *Next Generation's* "100 top games of all time" in NO. 21. This pedigree works both for and against Saturn Bomberman — the basic gameplay goodness of the series isn't tarnished, but nevertheless, the latest offering from Hudson Soft doesn't attain the classic status of S2.

The most distinguishing new feature of Saturn Bomberman is the ten-man, widescreen view of the Battle Mode. By hooking up two of Sega's Six-

Way Multi-Taps, prospective bombers can experience a whole new level of calculated mayhem that exceeds in scale and intensity (though not in simplicity, balance, and sheer gameplay perfection) the four-player Battle Mode in Super Bomberman 2. The biggest drawback of the 10-player mode is that the game characters and power-up icons are reduced to such a small size that players can't help but be confused at times. There is a normal screen mode that offers smaller yet more easily discernible mazes for up to six players.

In terms of gameplay, Bomberman has been and always will be about multiplayer gaming, and there is plenty of the flavor of the series to appeal to new gamers and to fans alike; still, the game is likely to appeal more to the uninitiated than to the hard-core S2 player. That's because the inclusion of



Bomberman allows intense 10-player action via a couple of Sega's 6-Way Multi-taps

new icon power-ups and special kartogen power-ups will seem like blasphemy to S2 fans while everyone else is enjoying the new strategic possibilities of these additions without feeling as if some perfect formula has been tampered with.

One area where Saturn Bomberman does exceed the classic is in its single-player mode. There are now four one-player modes that offer a decidedly less frantic (but more cerebral) puzzle-game-like experience that far surpasses in quality the one-player game in Super Bomberman 2.

In the final analysis, Saturn Bomberman offers a lot of strong gameplay without a lot of graphical flash and superficial pizzazz of other 32-bit games. If it wasn't for the fact that one of its predecessors is considered by many to be gameplay perfection, Saturn Bomberman would probably receive much more acclaim. As it is, the game is probably the best addition to the Bomberman series since S2, but that's an awful tough act to follow.

Rating: ★★

PC**Atlantis: The Lost Tales**

Developer: Cryo

Publisher: Interplay

French developer Cryo has carved a small niche for itself in the graphic adventure market with previous titles like *Dune*, *Lost Eden*, and *Versailles 1685*, all stylish games with interesting storylines that don't break much new ground in gameplay mechanics. *Atlantis* makes a few concessions to new technology and offers a good time, but it doesn't break



Atlantis is pretty, but while the gameplay is painless, it's not as good as the graphics

the Cryo mold.

Beginning in Atlantis, then spreading to four other continents, the game follows the story of Seth, who begins his first day as a servant to the Atlantean Queen Rhea and right away discovers there's a plot afoot. The game uses prerendered scenery, which boasts stylish design and intricate detail — admittedly drop dead gorgeous stuff! While each locale is basically composed of still screens, the game uses a process called "Omni 3D," so players can use the mouse to pan around a full 360 degrees,

both horizontally and vertically in each area. The effect is a little vengeful-inducing at first, and in the end doesn't add much to the usual graphic adventure point-and-click mechanics, but it does help to break up the static feel prerendered games are prone to.

The good-sized world is populated by quite a number of prerendered NPCs, all of whom speak with CD-supplied voices. The acting ranges from pretty good to pretty bad about the best one can expect, but Cryo also uses a technique called "Omni-Synch" to make

HE PUT THE DEATH IN DESTRUCTION...

By Tom



www.ebworld.com

- CHAT EVENTS
- CONTESTS
- REVIEWS
- DEMOS
- RELEASE DATES
- ONLINE SHOPPING

PC

the tip movements match the words — in theory it's clear at times the process isn't perfect yet, matching up just well enough to call attention to the fact that it never quite gets it just right.

Still, the game's rough spots are few. Most of the puzzles are pitched at the right level of challenge (including a cross-dressing solution, which, coming on the heels of Final Fantasy VII, makes two such episodes in two different games in two months — just synchronicity or the beginning of a weird trend?), and it takes about the usual 30 or 40 hours to finish. Nicely done, but not much new.

Rating: ★★★

Dragon Dice

Publisher: Interplay

Developer: Interplay

Some pen-and-paper games survive the transition to computer game quite well. Others, for whatever reason, should have been left out of the computer arena altogether. Dragon Dice falls into the latter category. On paper Dragon Dice is a fine game. Two to four players square off with armies of dice, with each die representing one character in the army. The players then battle for territory on the game map by rolling their dice and removing dice that have been killed. The winner is the one who conquers all of the terrain in the land.

The first problem with Dragon Dice, the computer game, is that it's displayed only in a low-resolution window. It appears the developers have



Dragon Dice is disappointing however you look at this tiny window

never heard of full-screen mode, and in fact the window size can't be changed at all — even the Win 95 maximize button is grayed out. Unless the size of the desktop itself is changed, you're stuck with that tiny window.

Once players get into the game itself, they will find that the core game consists simply of clicking a button to roll dice. This may be great for a tabletop game, but it's pretty boring for a computer game. Beyond rolling the dice there's little interaction, just basic onscreen notes showing the outcome. The computer AI is OK, but nothing special. A decent human player shouldn't have too much trouble beating it.

The game does support up to four

players over a LAN, which might help it appeal to dedicated players of the tabletop game, except for one major problem: Dragon Dice isn't the most stable game on the planet. In fact, Next Generation loaded it on two different systems and it eventually crashed up every time. Crashes never occurred in the same place, but they were consistent enough that it was rare players could finish a single game.

Rails of the tabletop version of Dragon Dice would be better off finding a friend and using their money to purchase additional sets of real dice. It's a lot more fun than playing on the computer, and there's never a worry about the game crashing.

Rating: *

Extreme Assault

Publisher: Blue Byte

Developer: Blue Byte

Only thanks to an excellent use of 3Dfx acceleration does Extreme Assault manage to create an awesome landscape, as well as realistic 3D objects, all while maintaining a decent frame rate. Unfortunately, it doesn't help much, and players will quickly become bored, since Extreme Assault offers a very simple gameplay and no story to speak of.

The game is divided into four operation areas, each of which is divided into ten or so missions, the exact number varies. The only hints as to why the hell any of this matters are given in quick, pretension briefings, which inevitably boil down to, "Kill everything in sight." Any private with an opposable thumb could quickly master what passes for gameplay, which essentially requires locking on to a target (press one key, firing, hold down a key, and killing everything in sight as necessary).

Graphically, the game more than holds its own — if a player is using a 3Dfx-based accelerator. With 3D enhancement, Extreme Assault offers a number of varied and interesting landscapes, including mountains, volcanoes, and rolling hills, along with highly detailed vehicles like helicopters and tanks. Unfortunately, for those who don't have access to any 3D accelerator or high-end system, even this level of eye candy enjoyment will be out of reach. The reality: playing in 320x200 with little detail.

HE PUT THE GUTS IN GLORY. NOW...



**Laugh while you frag, from
Hollywood to outer space!**



Bag some aliens with over a dozen hi-tech weapons!



An all-out overload of
non-stop carnage!

DUKE NUKEM: TOTAL MELTDOWN

Duke's in town. And there's nothing he hates more than an army of alien punks crowding his space. 34 levels of freak-smashing 3D mayhem should see to it. Gigantic guns! Gruesome enemies! Total interaction! And all-out devastation! Don't mess with The Man!



PlayStation

Developed by



RP

3D REALMS
www.3drealms.com

HFS GO TOGETHER

PlayStation and PlayStation™ 2 are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective companies.



Big weapons and bigger bosses
for a fun-filled fragfest!



Earthquakes, exploding buildings
and working subways!



Co-operative, split-screen
hotmatch action.

DUKE NUKEM 64

From L.A. to the moon - 32 towering levels of 100% interactive carnage! On film sets, in bars, on moving subways... no butt-ugly alien is safe from the wrath of Duke! Grenade Launchers. Shrink Rays. Hardcore 3D action. And graphics to kill for. Duke's coming to take out the garbage!

DOMINATING SOMEONE



GT Interactive
Software
www.gtinteractive.com



It's pretty, but Extreme Assault eventually wears thin with its repetitive gameplay

For the high-end user, Extreme Assault nicely handles an open game area, with detailed objects and a high frame rate. Unfortunately, things quickly wear thin, leaving the player with little idea of the point of the whole exercise, and less reason to care.

Rating: ★★

iF-22 Raptor

Publisher: Interactive Magic
Developer: Image Labs

For some six months earlier this year, Interactive Magic and Novavision were locked in a controversy over whether it was legally permissible for Novavision, or any company, to own the exclusive license to an item of military hardware. Fortunately for sim fans, military craft funded with public money were ruled public domain (except for classified material, of course), so interactive Magic was free to release its own iF-22 Raptor title. Now that the hubub has died down and will hopefully be forgotten, we can all get on with the job of being gamers.

The game thoughtfully includes options that allow it to nicely straddle the middle ground between being immediately playable to the action addict while still maintaining its credibility as a sim. Players can choose from quickstart missions with full control over mission parameters, a full military campaign, and everything in between.



iF-22 Raptor is now legally available. No players will be embarrassed to have it on their shelf, but they could do better

As with many sims, learning the cockpit can be quite a challenge. Fortunately, there's very little involved in just jumping right in and flying. In fact, quickstart missions can even begin right in the air, weapons ready. Still, the manual is well-detailed and easy to follow, and the game includes a series of training missions designed to walk the player through each of the plane's systems.

All this having been said, however, iF-22 isn't the greatest flight sim of all time. The engine is relatively fast, the graphics are relatively pretty, and the missions are relatively interesting. Over the last few years, Interactive Magic has built itself a strong reputation for quality military sims. While it's certain that iF-22 Raptor won't dare to rep, it's not exactly going to push it further along either. There's a lot here for the casual pilot, and something for the flight fan, but for the hard-core sim purist, it's just not anything to shout about.

Rating: ★★★

Warlords III: Reign of Heroes

Publisher: Red Orb Entertainment
Developer: Strategic Studies Group

The Warlords series has always had its devotees, and with good reason — through two installments, it consistently offered some of the finest and most flexible turn-based strategy wargaming. While Warlords III continues that tradition, with the developers at \$60 steadfastly ignoring the temptation to fall in with the Warcraft and Command & Conquer clones and switch to a real-time engine. Expanding on its predecessors, Warlords III offers the same turn-based strategy approach with improved AI, high-resolution graphics, improved multiplayer support, and new features.

Strategy revolves around conquering and controlling cities —



With some new advancements over Warlords II, Warlords III has high-res graphics, improved AI, and full multiplayer support

cities generate income and produce units, so the more cities captured, the more powerful the player becomes. Warlords III offers 64 different unit types, and while only sixteen can be used at a given time, that's still quite a lot of choice. A new feature is the addition of heroes — unique characters who can be assigned to a player at the outset, or bought or earned, and who can affect normal unit combat, use special items, and cast spells.

Strategy games aren't usually known for their complex graphics, and Warlords is no exception, but there are distinct improvements over Warlords II. Units are the square tile counters, replaced by more realistic-looking sprites, which are even animated, if only slightly. The high-resolution display looks good, however, and everything is clear and readable.

Warlords III takes many of the best aspects of tabletop wargaming and adapts them nicely to a PC environment, even offering an extended campaign mode for the first time in the series. The game also supports up to eight players over a LAN and four over the Internet (via the Red Orb Zone), and it even handles email moves. For those who prefer the mellow pace of a turn-based environment, it's just about as good as it gets.

Rating: ★★★★

X-COM: Apocalypse

Publisher: Microprose
Developer: Mythos Games

The original X-COM: UFO Defense was an instant classic while its immediate sequel, X-COM: Terror From the Deep was a mild disappointment, using



The combat interface in X-COM: Apocalypse provides an incredible amount of data in a convenient manner

exactly the same game engine and merely upping the difficulty level. X-COM: Apocalypse is fully updated and expanded, and thus the first true sequel. Expectations have been high, but the final product delivers — just.

As in the original, X-COM

Apocalypse is broken up into two distinct sections: tactical combat and resource management. Set in 2046, the game's milieu has been limited to the single City of Mega Primus, the last stronghold of humanity on a devastated Earth, now the site of a third alien invasion. It's obvious the developers wanted to increase the detail and tension levels, but one of the game's biggest failings is they just haven't given the city much personality. The graphics are crisp yet sterile — a Sim City with no charm. There are really no characters for players to empathize with, and thus little incentive for them to rescue the faceless inhabitants.

In city mode, the interface leaves much to be desired. While button bars make accessing vehicle and soldier information easy, commanding these things is a different matter. Manning vehicles is difficult, and god forbid players try to enter buildings after the original alert is over. Even experienced players will need to fiddle with this tab or that before rediscovering the correct submenu.

However, once tactical combat begins, the combat engine is not only intact, but better. Time tracking, plus the addition of running and crawling modes, adds interesting new respects to firefighting. This is the kind of high-intensity, squad-level combat that made the original such a joy. On top of that, game play in Apocalypse is intact and every bit as good as it can be. As in previous games, the aliens begin with

BRUTAL

[ALL-TERRAIN RACING]

Blazing
into Stores
This November!



PC
CD
ROM

These are the most treacherous

motorcraft courses ever created. Test your stomach on a vehicle equal parts
motocross bike and rocket as you scream across sun-drenched sea courses, tree-choked bayou swamps, and snow-covered slopes. TruePhysics™ 3D technology brings every whip turn and spin into gut-wrenching reality. A triumph for the

PlayStation™ game console, Jet Moto for Windows® 95 features a network play option that enables you to race up to 20 friends simultaneously. Also compatible with all Direct3D video accelerators. Ride It. Feel It. Split some air.



Sony Interactive Studios America
PlayStation is trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Jet Moto, TruePhysics are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Windows 95 and Microsoft are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. ©1997 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc.

Jet Moto

rating

PC

The power of life

CreaturesPublisher: Mindscape
Developer: CyberLife

CyberLife introduces the latest word in the digital pet craze

First off, it is doubtful that there are those who wouldn't even consider creatures to be a game at all. There's no clearly defined goal and very little in the way of conflict. However, while this may be true, it also exists solely to provide entertainment, so what else would one call it? Whatever the category it eventually gets pigeonholed into, however, the fact remains that Creatures, which comes on a PC/Mac hybrid disc, is one of the most unique titles to come along in several years and well deserves all the attention it can get.

The idea is similar to the Tamagotchi and other digital pets. The "player" hatches, then raises a species of creature called Norns, cute, fuzzy anthropomorphic beings who resemble Gizmo from the Gremlins movies. They chirp and burble in nonsense tones, and while some people may be put off by their calcified saccharine design, they are, nevertheless, almost painfully cute and appealing. The game disc comes with an initial batch of six Norn eggs, three male and three female, each of which has its own unique "genetic" blueprint, which governs everything from appearance to intelligence to temperament.

Players can interact with their Norns by using an onscreen cursor but can't ever control them directly. Instead, Norns must first be taught a series of simple words and phrases — initially through the use of a "teaching machine" that's helpfully provided near the hatchery — then fed



Creatures' Norns may be overly cute to some, but once a player gets a good little family (herd? flock?) going, it's difficult to resist playing with them like real pets

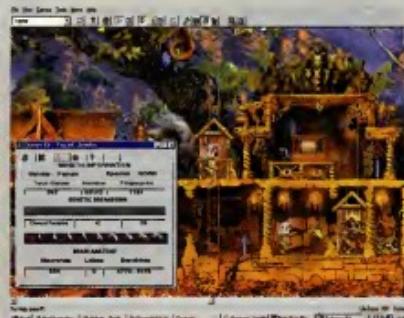
through their surprisingly rather expensive world of Albia, being given demonstrations of how various things work and getting rewarded (or punished) for their behavior. Eventually, Norns will grow to maturity, mate (through the rather chaste

method of loudly kissing each other), and produce successive generations of genetically unique offspring. Their world even includes a rival species called Gremlins, which like to slap Norns around and have a nasty habit of undoing carefully learned lessons in communication and behavior.

This is one of the most ambitious applications of Artificial Life paradigms ever brought to the mass market. While there is some controversy about whether or not Creatures is "really" artificial life, and whether the designers have cheated in various ways, in the end, it doesn't matter. Some will doubtless find the appeal elusive, but Creatures still offers one of the most obsessive and entertaining experiences anyone can have in front of the computer.



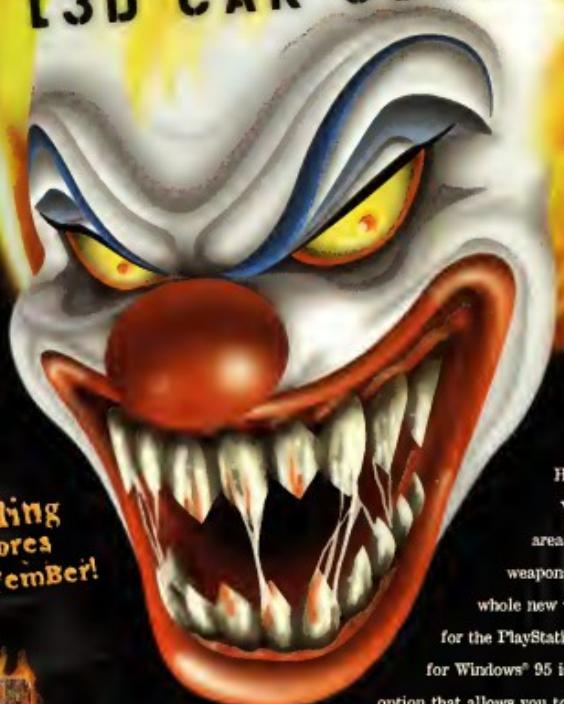
A computer is helpfully provided to aid in teaching Norns language (left). Breeding Norns and trading eggs over the Net have become a serious hobby in Europe since the game was released there last year (right)



Rating: ★★★★

INSANE

[3D CAR COMBAT]



Smashing
into Stores
This November!



Sony Interactive Studios America
PlayStation is a trademark of Sony Computer
Entertainment Inc. Twisted Metal and Drive Angry
are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment
America Inc. Windows 95 and Microsoft are
registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation.
©1997 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc.

The most twisted driving and shooting game ever created just packed its bags and hit the road — Paris, New York, Hong Kong, Antarctica, and beyond. With eight new levels in all, hidden areas, world landmarks to destroy, new weapons and killer combo-attacks — it's a whole new world to blow away! A monster hit for the PlayStation® game console, Twisted Metal 2 for Windows® 95 is a direct port with a network play option that allows you to annihilate up to 8 friends in a single match. Also compatible with all Direct3D video accelerators.

Get ready. Get twisted. Drive Angry.



PC
CD ROM

TWISTED METAL 2



rating**PC**

cautious forays but quickly get plain nasty. The designers have added the option of playing in real time, but this feels like a gimmick and doesn't play out well within the X-COM structure — there's too much to keep track of, which means ignoring a lot and leaving soldiers to fend for themselves for stretches. This ignores the fact that it's precisely the high level of detail in control that makes the engine so attractive in the first place.

In the end, Apocalypsis is a step in the right direction for the series, but a step with a wobble. With better control over the chrysalis, and more distinct atmosphere and character, it would have been a smash. As it is, it's enjoyable, and well-worth the investment in money and time, but not what it could have been.

Rating: ★★*

XCar: Experimental Racing

Publisher: Bethesda

Software:

Developer: Mediatech West

Delayed for a bit but finally available, Bethesda's XCar: Experimental Racing is one strange bird — not necessarily a

bad thing, just difficult to pin down. Based around a class of vehicles called the "sports prototypes," XCar attempts to pull the player into the world of cutting-edge, high-tech auto racing, offering sixteen of the most advanced cars in the world and ten tracks to race them on.

The tracks offer a lot of background variety. Most are bright, outdoorsy venues, from Mayan jungles to the American desert, which initially give XCar a decidedly arcade-like atmosphere — most players feel they can just jump right in and take off. However, while the game certainly features enough adjustments in difficulty and realism to make this possible, it misses the point. At its heart, XCar is a true racing sim. Indeed, there is a daunting number of options for customizing cars, from different engines (there's even an engine editor, available as a patch), so players can create their own to a paint shop and everything in between. There's even a fairly comprehensive telemetry display for testing and tweaking a car's performance.

Although the box lists the minimum system as a P40, to really appreciate the game's graphics and control requires a bit more



XCar offers players a chance to not only drive extremely fast cars, but design their own from the ground up

horsepower; at least a P120, preferably a 3Dfx-based accelerator (one-side note: the paint shop doesn't work under 3Dfx enhancement). For players who can afford it, the game is beautiful to look at, and the control is as smooth and responsive as one could ask for.

There are an awful lot of racing

titles out there, nearly all aimed at enthusiasts of one particular circuit or class of car. XCar has no license to speak of, throwing out any sort of endorsement in favor of raw performance and above all, speed. For players who just want to go fast, it delivers.

Rating: ★★★

Macintosh**Achtung Spitfire**

Publisher: Avalon Hill

Developer: Big Time Software

Achtung Spitfire is Avalon Hill and Big Time Software's latest strategic air combat game. Flight sim jockeys should beware, though, because Achtung Spitfire has more in common with Panzer General than it does with Falcon. The game is the latest in a long line of turn-based, tactical-board-game-style titles from the two companies. Players familiar with the classic Flight Commander II should feel immediately comfortable with Achtung Spitfire.

The player commands the Royal Air Force 11 Group, defending Britain against German attacks during World War II. Achtung Spitfire is based on the Over the Reich game engine, which Avalon Hill released late last year, but playing requires a completely different strategy. The game takes place during the battle of Britain, so careful resource management of available pilots and aircraft, and strategic decisions about when to launch planes, as well as which planes to launch, have as much to do with



The Royal Air Force and Luftwaffe engage in a turn-based battle over England in **Achtung Spitfire**

winning the war as the actual combat.

There are more than thirty campaign combat situations, and players can choose to command either the British or German air force. New to the genre are naval attacks and a host of relatively unknown aircraft used over the skies of Britain. Period music, photographs, and artwork all lend verisimilitude to the game and enhance the experience. Achtung Spitfire isn't breaking new ground, but it is a solid and entertaining game, and a thoughtful diversion from the usually frenetic nature of computer games.

Rating: ★★*

Gridz

Publisher: Green Dragon

Developer: Green Dragon

Gridz is the latest game from Green Dragon Creations, the company that ported NetMech and Links LS to Mac and developed Xenophobe for Bally. Gridz is a quirky combination of puzzle and action game that takes place in a Tron-like cyber environment in which the player generates automotors called Toolbots to expand the grid empire, kick away at enemy empires, or attack enemy Toolbots. Choosing the right Toolbots has a big impact on



Toolbots out for a hard day's work make up the gameplay of **Gridz**

how quickly you can eliminate your opponents' grid and expand your own. He who claims the most grids wins.

Gridz is a fun, simple game, but after the sixth or seventh level, it gets a bit redundant. What elevates this game above mediocrity is an unusual clarity of purpose in graphics, control, and design. Gridz is interesting to look at, and the Toolbots' graphics and animations make you want to continue long enough to see more. Control is mouse-based and intuitive, which allows players to focus on strategy and winning rather than on which key to press. Control surfaces feel natural, and winning strategies develop easily and naturally out of gameplay.

Gridz doesn't fall neatly into a genre but resembles classic arcade games of the early '80s like Q-Bert. Most gamers will find it entertaining, especially playing over the Net, a feature that hasn't been implemented yet, but Green Dragon promises soon. Unfortunately, the game can't be found in stores. Like so many other commercially developed Macintosh games that can't find shelf space, Gridz is only for sale online.

Rating: ★★★

WIN!

THE IMAGINE PUBLISHING

SHOPPING SPREE

@ ELECTRONICS BOUTIQUE!



GRAND PRIZE

\$500

WILD SHOPPING SPREE AT THE ELECTRONICS BOUTIQUE IN YOUR AREA! CHOOSE FROM EB'S STUPENDOUS SELECTION OF THE HOTTEST PC AND CONSOLE GAMES FOR THE SYSTEM OF YOUR CHOICE! PLUS, T-SHIRTS AND CD-ADMS FULL OF GAME DEMOS NOT YET AVAILABLE IN STORES!



1st PRIZE

NINTENDO 64TM GAME SYSTEM OR
PLAYSTATIONTM GAME SYSTEM

AND A FREE SUBSCRIPTION OF YOUR CHOICE:
NEXT GENERATION - THE MAG FOR ADVANCED GAMERS
PSM - THE 100% INDEPENDENT PLAYSTATION
MAGAZINE - IMAGINE'S HOTTEST NEW LAUNCH, OR
ULTRA GAMEPLAYERS - THE ORIGINAL GAMES
MAGAZINE FULL OF TIPS, TRICKS AND STRATEGY GUIDES.

2nd PRIZE

INTERGRAPH'S INTENSE 3D VOOODOO BORRO
FEATURING 3DFX ACCELERATORS
AND A FREE SUBSCRIPTION TO PC GAMER
- THE #1 PC GAMES MAGAZINE.

3rd PRIZE

TWO N64 OR PLAYSTATION GAMES OF YOUR
CHOICE PLUS A T-SHIRT & IMAGINE BASEBALL
CRP!

- Winners to be announced in ULTRA Gameplayers and Next Generation
- Check out IGN, Imagine Games Network at <http://www.imaginegames.com> for more information
- All prizes subject to availability.

imagine
a new way of publishing



ULTRA
gameplayers

NEXT
GENERATION



Sponsored by:
Imagine Publishing, Inc.,
America's Number 1 Games
Magazine Publisher
and Electronics Boutique,
The Ultimate Gaming Store

DESIGN, FINE ARTS, MEDIA ARTS, CRAFTS, DANCE, MUSIC, THEATER ARTS,
ARTS EDUCATION, WRITING FOR MEDIA AND PERFORMANCE, MULTIMEDIA

WHY WAS I STUDYING ECONOMICS
WHEN WHAT I REALLY LOVED WAS ANIMATION?

JAE CHON
BFA, ANIMATION
CLASS OF 1996

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS

BROAD AND PINE STREETS, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19102
FOR INFO OR FREE BROCHURE: 1-800-618-ARTS FAX: 215-875-5458

NEXT GENERATION July 1997

now hiring

Advertising Inquiries

(415) 468-4684 x467
Imagine Publishing, Inc.
150 North Hill Drive
Brisbane, CA 94035

Next Generation

Career opportunities section

now hiring online:

<http://www.next-generation.com/nowhiring.html>

Extreme Education
Digital Animation & Production

Learn:
3D Studio MAX
Visual Basic
Alias Wavefront
Adobe Photoshop
Fractal Painter
Superscape
World Tool Kit
C and C++ Programming
Softimage
Macromedia Software
Placement, Financial Aid, VA Services

www.uact.edu

UNIVERSITY of Advancing Computer Technology
(FORMERLY CAD INSTITUTE)

Call Today for Information **1-800-658-5744**
E-mail admissions@uact.edu ■ <http://www.uact.edu>



<http://www.aoi.edu> EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

EVER SEE A
MOVIE SPECIAL EFFECT
THAT LEFT YOU SITTING
THERE IN AWE OF
THE TECHNOLOGY?
GET OVER IT...
CREATE IT!

Computer Animation • Multimedia • Video Production
Graphic Design • Web Site Administration
Programs not available at all locations

1.800.592.0700



The Art Institutes International®

300 Sixth Avenue • Pittsburgh, PA 15222
©The Art Institutes International®, Inc., 1997 NEXGEN

Atlanta • Chicago • Dallas • Denver • Fort Lauderdale • Houston • Los Angeles
Minneapolis • Philadelphia • Phoenix • Pittsburgh • Schaumburg • Seattle



Q. What's the one thing more fun than playing GREAT new games?

*If you're still thinking about it, look at the bottom of the page)



If you instantly know the answer to this question, Konami wants to talk to you!

Konami Computer Entertainment is looking for experienced console and PC development people who know the meaning of great gameplay.

We are opening an all new development office in the San Francisco Bay area (Redwood City to be exact) and are looking for a creative team of professionals.

Making great games is hard work,
but who says it can't be a blast at the same time.

Konami offers talented people a highly competitive compensation package combined with exciting projects, career advancement and a great working environment.

The company has numerous positions open for quality Senior Team Leaders, Programmers, Producers, Artist/Illustrators, Sound Designers and other game professionals.
Contact us and find out what you've been missing...

Send resume and/or sample work to; Human Resources
Konami Computer Entertainment America
1400 Bridge Parkway
Redwood City, CA 94065

Check out our web site to learn more about the opportunities at Konami.

Web site: WWW.Konami.com/kcea.htm e-mail: kceahr@konami.com

A. Making a living creating them!



Other Seeking

30 yo WM, 5'11" 155lbs
desperately seeking anything
medically classified as alive, for
long interesting talks on
everything. tel-150

Ex multi-media fun house, now
proud software port house needs
people to slowly wither away
under a deluge of dull and soulless
toll, P 'poacher' H tel-148

Multinational Company trying very
hard to understand games, seeks
people with little to offer in
exchange for secure but pointless
work, if all else has failed contact
Bill tel-146

Young creative Secure North West
games company seeks hard
working, fun loving, self starting
partners who care passionately
about their work and who are
looking for good fun irreverent
times. tel-149

34yo WM looks 50'ish, 5'9"
350lbs, seeks fun loving bovine
playmate's for outdoor fun in the
rain. Must be discreet. Tel-147

You: Talented individual who's future involves creating art or code for the best video games? Us: Interested. You always knew the life of your dreams would be found in the personal ads. Boss Game Studios is looking for experienced artists, animators and programmers, as well as artists and animators looking for their first gaming experience. Artists should have a classical art background with computer experience a strong plus and must submit samples/demo reel; programmers should have at least 1 published game on any format. Please send your best samples/resume to:

Kimberly Little
8383 158th Avenue NE, Suite 100
Redmond, WA 98052

BOSS
GAME STUDIOS



Exceptional Opportunities

We are a leading developer of top quality, award-winning entertainment and education products for the video game, home computer, multimedia and on-line markets. Founded in 1988, Stormfront works with top clients such as Electronic Arts, Discovery Communications, Maxx, Sony, Creative Wonders and America Online. Platforms currently supported include PC (Win95), PSX, N64, and Mac.

Stormfront focuses on developing only products with the highest quality and market potential! Its 70-member in-house staff of award-winning programmers, artists, 3D modelers, animators, writers and audio engineers uses a team-oriented approach to create products that feel hand-crafted instead of mass-produced.

In 1997, for the second straight year, Stormfront was the only development organization in the world to ship major titles in the PC Sports market (Madden NFL '98, La Russa Baseball 4), the console Action market (NASCAR '98 for PSX) and the PC Strategy/Electronic Warfare (Byzantine: The Betrayal), based in San Rafael, California, just north of San Francisco. Stormfront is privately held.

We are looking to add to our staff a small number of exceedingly talented programmers who are gamers and interested in making a difference in our business. The positions open are as follows:

Lead PC Programmer: Racing II Sr. **PSX Programmer: Racing**

Lead PC Programmer or Sr. PC Programmer: Baseball

Java Programmer: Variety of Games II Sr. **All Programmers: Football**

Entry-level PSX Programmer: Racing II **On-line Programmer: Baseball**

If you love playing and designing games, enjoy finding creative solutions to complex problems and want to make a difference in this industry, we would like to talk to you. We're looking for talented, hard-working, self-motivated individuals who'd enjoy collaborating with some of the top game and multimedia talent in the industry. Our is an open environment of small, mixed-discipline development teams, where high standards are respected and contributions are recognized.

We offer a very competitive pay, benefits and stock options program. Please mail your resume to: Stormfront Studios, M. Daglow, 4440 Civic Center Dr., San Rafael, CA 94963. Fax: (415) 461-5865. E-mail: MDaglow@pacifier.com. Please visit our website at: www.stormfrontstudios.com

Join Our Squad!

Advanced Productions, Inc. is looking for talented and motivated people to assist us in the creation of high quality, ground breaking interactive entertainment.

INTERNET PROGRAMMER

Must have experience programming in Windows 95, C/C++, JAVA, UNIX, database and network programming, CGI Scripting, and GUI programming to work on Internet and Entertainment related projects.

NETWORK ADMINISTRATOR

2 Years administration experience required. Must have strong and diverse hardware background. Will work with systems consisting of PCs & UNIX based machines. Responsibilities will include setting up new machines, servers, daily maintenance and user support. Working knowledge of UNIX, NT, and Win 95 systems; Communications, TCP/IP, security, firewalls, RAS, Internet services, web browsing, publishing, file transfer, e-mail, Silicon Graphics workstations, and rendering farms. Video Game company background a plus.

PROGRAMMER

Will work on internet, database, and multimedia related projects. Requires experience in database programming, network programming, Windows 95/C/C++, UNIX, CGI Scripting, JAVA, Delphi, and NetObjects FUSION.

We offer competitive salaries and benefits.

Anyone can play games... only a select few can make them.



Advanced Productions, Inc. Fax Resumé to:
1236 Hempstead Tpk.
Franklin Square, NY 11010
Attn: Lawrence Reiff

E-mail:
LReiff@apigames.com

BLACK OPS ENTERTAINMENT is looking for programmers and artists who are passionate about making videogames. Black Ops currently has several projects in development with different publishers: 'Cover/W.A.R.S.' a character-based action game, '007: The James Bond Adventure' game, a game based on the James Bond universe, 'The Savage Lands', and a sports title, 'Treasures of the Deep' an underwater action/adventure game for the Sony Playstation, will be released this fall by Namco. We have several positions available. Some of the requirements we're looking for are:

PROGRAMMERS:

- Playstation/ Win95 programming experience
- Must have 2+ years exp. programming in C
- Strong 3D / Math programming background
- Previous game experience or college degree
- CD-ROM development experience a plus
- Tool development experience a plus

BLACK OPS ENTERTAINMENT is a stable game developer with a strong foundation of hardworking and creative people. Enthusiasm, energy and a positive attitude are prerequisites for all applicants.

ARTISTS:

- Photoshop, 3DStudio MAX
- Sony Art Tools, Debabelizer
- Alias/Wavefront experience
- Must have PC/Win/DOS and/or MAC exp.
- 2D Texture painters/ 3D modelers/3D animators.
- Videogame art production experience a plus

Send your resume resumé to:

BLACK OPS ENTERTAINMENT, c/o Human Resources
2121 Cloverfield Blvd, Suite 204 • Santa Monica,
CA 90404
FAX: (310)829-0263

SPECIAL OFFER • SPECIAL OFFER • SPECIAL OFFER



FREE ISSUE OF **ULTRA** *gameplayers*

THE ULTIMATE IN GAMING ENTERTAINMENT.

ULTRA Gameplayers focuses on all the major game systems currently available (including PC's) and provides a monthly buyers' guide to all new releases. With its intelligent humor and sharp, accurate journalism, **ULTRA Gameplayers'** editorial gives a funny and irreverent look at games.

Game Players was the first video game magazine in America. Relaunched as **ULTRA Gameplayers**, it's still the best.

Check out the

- unbeatable reviews
- hottest strategies
- great previews

Call **1-800-706-9500** to receive your **FREE** issue of **ULTRA Gameplayers** at no risk. If you're pleased with what you see, we'll send you 12 more issues (13 in all) for only \$19.95—over **65% off** the cover price!

With your paid order, we'll send you the **Book of Cheats**—jammed full of tips and tricks for all the hottest games, absolutely **FREE!**

Offer good in US only. Cover price is \$4.95. Canada: \$US 23.95, includes GST. Foreign \$US 43.95. Prepaid in US funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery of first issue.

CHARTER SUBSCRIPTION OFFER ONLY \$1 AN ISSUE!



FIRST ISSUE - THE REVOLUTION STARTS HERE!

PSM

100% Independent PlayStation Magazine

PSM STICKER FREE WITH PURCHASE

It's HERE! FINAL FANTASY VII

10-Page Guide + Pull-Out Tip Card!

10-PAGES EVER! PlayStation Code EVER!

Mario Bros.
Crash Bandicoot
Metal Gear Solid 2
Centipede
Grand Theft Auto III
Metal Gear Solid

All new!

CALL

1-800-706-9500

TO START RECEIVING PSM - 100%
INDEPENDENT PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE

YOU'LL RECEIVE A FULL YEAR OF PSM
-12 ISSUES- FOR ONLY \$12.00.
A SAVINGS OF ALMOST

83% OFF THE COVER PRICE!

Offer good in US only. Annual cover price is \$71.88. Canada
US\$26. Includes GST. Foreign US\$40. Prepaid in US funds
only. Please allow 4-8 weeks for delivery of first issue.

SCORE \$10.00 OFF AT SEARS ON "THE BEST FOOTBALL GAME EVER MADE"

- ULTRA GAME PLAYERS

NFL *GAMEDAY*TM 98



\$10 OFF

NFL
*GAMEDAY*TM
98

\$10 OFF

SEARS
funtronics



R 5 7 7 0 4 2 9 # 1 0 0 0

Good for \$10 off Sears Funtronics Dept. regular purchase price. Valid 10/1/97 - 01/31/98 only. Offer not good on layaway balances, gift certificates or credit card payments. Not redeemable for cash. Not valid on any other coupons or offers. Limit one coupon per transaction, one per customer. Void where prohibited by law. Cash value 1/20¢. © 1997 Sears, Roebuck and Co. Satisfaction guaranteed or your money back.



Sony Computer Entertainment logo is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. PlayStation and the PlayStation logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Officially licensed product of the National Football League. The NFL shield design and NFL are trademarks of the National Football League. Team names, nicknames, logos and other indicia are trademarks of the teams indicated. TM and © 1997 NFL Properties Inc. PlayStation is a registered trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Developed by Sony Interactive Studios America. © 1997 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc.

Get it off your chest. Give in to your primal need to communicate, pontificate, venerate, contemplate, and alliterate. Write us via email at **Next Generation** Letters: ngonline@imagine-inc.com. Everything is read, if not replied to. We reserve the right to edit letters for space, clarity, or to help avoid lawsuits

Letters

Letters of transit

I read with great interest the letter in your most recent issue about being carded at an arcade, and wanted to weigh in with an opinion on the other side of the issue.

In the past, video arcades have not generally been appealing to adults because they tend to become teeny-bopper hangouts, particularly in the evenings. My idea of a great evening out does not involve going to a place filled with hundreds of high school kids. It was fun when I was that age, but I don't fit in with that crowd anymore.

It may seem unfair to the younger crowd, but places like GameWorks and Speedzone have discovered there is a largely untapped market of adults who are willing to spend money in an arcade if the environment is right. Part of this environment involves the presence of a bar, but more importantly, the presence of other adults. If you've ever gone to a party where you didn't fit in and remember how you felt, you will understand why these arcades try to limit the crowd to adults in the

late evenings.

As for alienating "future consumers," I don't think these places need to worry. Looking out, the younger generation certainly hasn't diminished the appeal of bars, nightclubs, casinos, and other such businesses. Generally, the age requirement heightens the desire for people to patronize the establishment once they are old enough to be allowed in.

Joel Lingefelter
jofefful.org

Point made. Anyone else?

People tell me that there is a new PlayStation chip that could play Japanese games on American PlayStations. Is that true? If it is, how much does it cost?

J.D. Roberts
jaydee93@juno.com

Actually, for \$750, Sony's black Yarze hobbyist PlayStation development system can play Japanese titles just fine — it lets you code games too. Blue "testing stations" can play even unencrypted PlayStation discs,

although these are even more expensive and can't be bought unless you're a licensed developer.

The other option is to find a gray market vendor who can perform an operation known as "chipping" — replacing the regional lockout chip within the PlayStation for one that can play discs intended for markets outside the U.S. For various reasons, we can't recommend such a vendor, but look on the internet, since most such shops have web pages. Barring Net access, most places that provide the service tend to be smaller "Mom & Pop" operations and are not affiliated with any chain, so check mechanics and video stores who do PlayStation repairs and don't deal directly with Sony (who really, really, really frowns on this, by the way).

Needless to say, if you do chip your PlayStation, you'll void your warranty and you could open yourself up to some serious legal trouble if you use the chipped PlayStation to play pirated games — including violation of copyright laws, which can result in severe civil and criminal penalties.

Caveat emptor.

I've been reading your magazine for a long time. I like it well enough, but there's one thing that just gets me every time I pick it up. The rating system sucks. You rated some of my favorite games three stars or less! Get with it, people — start being objective. It's like you just looked at screenshots and decided you didn't like them.

First of all, X-Wing vs. TIE Fighter is a GREAT game, and you guys dogged on it the whole time. Sure, it may not be a technological breakthrough, but it's got better graphics and I think better gameplay than the first two

games combined.

You rated Soul Blade as a four star when it obviously deserves five stars. After playing Soul Blade, I put down Tekken 2 and I haven't played it since, and it got five stars.

And that's not the end of it. Other games like Broken Helix, Discworld, Jet Octane, Jet Moto, Carnage Heart, and especially Horned Owl, all underrated.

Just get with it.

William Smith
Jerry33@juno.com

Um, to begin with, using your own opinions about games as the defining yardstick for our "objectivity," stating the case prima facie with little further evidence, has an obvious logical and semantic flaw.

However, rest assured, **Next Generation**'s reviewers do spend an inordinate amount of time with each title — just ask our worsome managing editor — and the reasoning behind every score is made clear in the body of the review (usually — we admit not always, but this is the ideal we aspire to). Whether what was important to us is important to you is then for you to decide, and you can form your own opinions accordingly.

Besides which, every one of the games you mentioned got very positive scores — for the umpteenth time, three stars means a good game. And most of the games you mention, including Jet Moto and Carnage Heart, got an excellent rating of four stars. Chill.

I have a few points to make regarding the intro in **NG 33**. First, why does a question like ("Is technology finished?") even come up? It is either arrogant or ignorant to think that the current technology you have is utterly



Are upscale, adult-oriented arcades like GameWorks a benefit to mature gamers, or are they shutting out their core audience?

corresponding

unimprovable John Romero (and others like him) fail to see the limits of their own technology. I have a list of complaints from me and others like me about the lack of realism from the Quake engine (and from any engine, at that), which can only be remedied by the construction of a new game engine. For the sake of space I have decided not to present the list, but let me just say that anyone who thinks that technology is finished should be planning for retirement because if they don't advance the technology, then someone else will and they will be left behind.

Second, I would like to compliment whoever thought of the analogy in the third paragraph comparing the end of the road for technology to the patent office. As far as I can see, John Romero thinks that everything that can be invented, has been.

Elling Eidbo

Paintboy@ix.netcom.com

The point that Romero and (the many) others who share his view are trying to make is that videogame technology has reached the "movie camera" stage. While there has been innovation in cameras, the cameras used to make *Birth of a Nation* (the first feature film) aren't that different from the ones used to make *Anaconda*. Yet the creativity of moviemakers and the quality of movies have continued to... well, maybe *Anaconda* wasn't the best example, but you get the point. Am Romero and company right? The first indication will surely be *Dakarata* — if it manages to be the "next big thing" while still using the "last big things" engine. Romero's arguments will carry much more weight. Time will tell.

Injoyed NG 33, especially the how to sell your game idea article, since for a year I have been documenting a game floating around in my head. I think it's great that a magazine has shown the behind-the-scenes of what it takes to get noticed, even with the fact that most companies have policies

of not even opening unsolicited game ideas, let alone reading them. I have found this to be the hard truth on my own.

I'm far from the authority on selling game ideas, but I think readers should also know there are other ways to get game ideas noticed. Contests are an example. Nintendo recently held an idea contest for kids, and I've also been told that sometimes there are contests amateurs can enter for cash prizes. Some readers might say, "Yeah right," but I would think the odds of winning and the odds of actually getting an idea read by a game company are about the same. At least you would have a chance, and most companies that I've seen ideas to won't even give you that.

Jason Martin
c00nerozero00@hotmail.com

Certainly an idea, basically, anything you can do to get your ideas noticed — short of breaking the law, of course — is worth trying. The amateur contest you're referring to is sponsored by Enix. This year the Japanese company is giving away a top prize of \$200,000 to the best project submitted by December 20, 1997, with a total of \$400,000 to be awarded. The catch, for budding designers anyway, is that you must submit a finished game, not just an idea. And yes, people really do win (the winner of the 1996 contest was a puzzle game designed by two friends in Chile). For more info, check out the company's contest page at http://www.enix.com/en/jp/enix/contest_j/index_n.html.

Several months ago you guys did a huge article on Net Yaroze, Sony's PlayStation home development kit. You (along with others in the industry) talked about how great this would be, how it would allow anyone who could program in C to write games like people did in the old days of the Apple II and the Commodore 64, how it would bring fresh, new ideas to the industry. Being a novice programmer myself, I was extremely interested in its



Actually, we think the sad truth is that in order to get their wings, cherubs have to trade in their belly buttons. It's a quid pro quo thing.

prospects.

Well, it's been quite some time since that article, and I haven't seen shit about it in your magazine since. Was it released? How many units were sold? Did it sell more or less than Sony's expectations? Are there any promising results yet? What's the feedback from people who have purchased it? Have you guys played anything that's been created by it? What's the deal?

Michael Rubin
mikerubin1@aol.com

Sony's Net Yaroze was in fact released earlier this year, amid much apparent public interest but little official fanfare from Sony. Since then Sony has kept almost completely silent on the subject, which would lead us to believe the system hasn't sold even as well as the already modest expectations the company had for it in the U.S.

However, that having been said, the developers-only area at the Net Yaroze U.S. site (<http://www.sossi.sony.com/net/>) — where you can also purchase the system, FYI — continues to hum along. When you consider that Yaroze titles currently in the works are the labor of one person (or perhaps a very small group), probably coded and designed during spare hours, it may in fact be a while yet before anything resembling an actual game becomes available for perusal — it also doesn't help that you have to

own a Yaroze to play a Yaroze-designed game.

We continue to follow the story though. We've had a Yaroze follow-up and how to on the back burner for a while. Look for it in the first half of 1998; in the meantime, check out the official Net Yaroze site at http://www.playstation.com/netyaroze/index_lo.html.

In issue 33, why doesn't the cherub on the cover have a belly button? Also, in issue 33, on page 146, the review of Super GT is in the arcade category but has the PC title bar above it. Was that a joke? And finally I'm wondering if anyone can tell me where I can find more information on the programs written about in the Toolbox section of issue 33 on page 22.

Stan Stanman
stanman@usaornet.com

The cherub is an angel. Angels are made, not born, so they don't have belly buttons. The PC header over Super GT was, well, a mistake. It should have said Arcade. As for the developer kits covered on page 22, that wasn't actually a Toolbox column, but rather a news story on software that will soon be available but isn't ready yet. Rest assured, as soon as the software is ready for review, you'll get the full story in future editions of Toolbox (which makes its long-overdue return in this issue, by the way).



BRAVO AIR RACE

Anyone can race on the ground.



10 hot planes.



3D courses



No roads anywhere



THQ

www.thq.com

©1998 THQ, Inc. PlayStation and the PlayStation logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

Arriving in September



Got Blood? Get Bloodier.

And win a trip to Monolith Headquarters in Seattle, or other great "Blood"-y prizes*.

Blood™ Plasma Pak:

The only expansion pak made by Monolith Productions, creators of BLOOD™

7 new maniacal monsters including Zealots, Fire Chrysalids and a new boss, The Beast!

3 powerful new weapon modes including Akimbo Tesla Cannons and the Sphere of Incineration for the Napalm Launcher!

11 all-new bloodcurdling levels including 2 sadistic new Multiplayer Bloodbath levels!

BLOOD™

PLASMA PAK

requires the
full version of BLOOD™



CD-ROM

GT
Produced by
Interactive
Software
www.gtinteractive.com

* RULES:

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Open to US residents over 18 years of age at time of entry. Void where prohibited by law. For entry information and official rules, visit GT's web site at <http://www.gtinteractive.com/blood> rules or send a SASE to GTIB 10 E. 40 St. NY, NY 10016. Attn: Blood Sweeps. Residents of MA and VT may omit postage. Game ends November 30, 1997. Blood™ Plasma Pak ©1997 Monolith Productions, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Created by Monolith Productions, Inc. Published and distributed by GT Interactive Software Corp. This game uses the Blood engine and tools by Ken Silverman. GT™ is a trademark and the GT logo™ is a registered trademark of GT Interactive Software Corp. All other trademarks are the property of their respective companies.

November 1997 Reader Survey

Tell us what you think about this month's issue of **Next Generation**.

1. How much time did you spend reading or looking at the November 1997 issue of **Next Generation** magazine? (Count all the times you picked up the issue)

Less than 30 minutes 30 minutes to 1 hour 1 to 1½ hours 1½ to 2 hours More than 2 hours

2. How many people, other than yourself, also read or looked at your personal copy of the November 1997 issue of **Next Generation** magazine? (If none, write 0)

_____ people

- 3) Please check how thoroughly you read each of the following articles/departments that appeared in this issue and how you rate each article you read.

Section/article	Didn't read	Read half	Read entirely	Your rating			
				Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
talking/Dr. Frankenstein	<input type="checkbox"/>						
breaking/Sega's new console	<input type="checkbox"/>						
breaking/Toolbox	<input type="checkbox"/>						
breaking/Joyriding	<input type="checkbox"/>						
breaking/Arcadia	<input type="checkbox"/>						
breaking/Movers and shakers	<input type="checkbox"/>						
ng special/25 breakthrough games	<input type="checkbox"/>						
ng software/Alphas	<input type="checkbox"/>						
ng special/The way games ought to be	<input type="checkbox"/>						
rating/Finals	<input type="checkbox"/>						
now hiring	<input type="checkbox"/>						
corresponding/Letters	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Haven't seen disc				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Next Generation disc	<input type="checkbox"/>						

- 4) How did you receive this month's issue of **Next Generation**?

Subscribe Bought at newsstand Given to me Other _____

- 5) If you purchased **Next Generation** at the newsstand, what prompted you to do so?

Cover Story Article (name) _____ Liked the look Other _____

- 6) Is there anything you'd like to see added to or changed about **Next Generation**? _____

- 7) Any other comments: _____

Please return completed forms to Next Generation Survey, Imagine Publishing, 150 North Hill Drive, Brisbane, CA 94005 or visit **Next Generation Online** to complete the online version of this form — www.next-generation.com/issue_survey.html

ATI Takes Xcitemen^t to Xtremes



If you can see it,
you can be it
- when you're an ATI
XPERT@Play.

- No-compromise 3D, 2D and video acceleration, with TV out
- More critical 3D features including bilinear filtering, alpha blending and special effects than any other card
- Non-stop 3D acceleration with over 1.2 million triangles per second and 60fps gameplay
- DVD-quality, full-screen, full-motion video
- Take gameplay to new heights by connecting to a large screen TV or record scores to a VCR
- Includes hot 3D games like Formula 1 and Terracide
- Prices start at just \$249
- Check out www.atitech.com or call (905)882-2600



MORE FEATURES

Feature	ATI	NVIDIA	Creative Graphics	3dfx
Dynamic Depth Cache	•			
Ultra Refresh Timing	•	•		
Turbo Decimation	•			
Alpha Blending Rate	•			
Stellar Plan Memory	64	16	16	
DVD Quality Video				
3D Acceleration (Mhz)	1000	720	60	

Copyright 1997 ATI Technologies Inc. ATI, XPERT@Play, and 3D BASE 950 and 630-TV are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of ATI Technologies Inc. All other company and product names are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of their respective manufacturers. Features, performance, and specifications may vary by operating environment and are subject to change without notice. Products may not be as exactly shown. Windows 95 and 98, WebTV 97, and 3D WebTV 97, on a Pentium II 266MHz, 128MB SDRAM memory at 100MHz, 17" CRT monitor, 720x480@60/72Hz respectively. Hardware and driver versions used: ATI 3DFX 1.11, 3DFX Voodoo 4000, driver v1.0, Matrox Mosaic 4MB SGRAM v1.2, driver v3.14, Creative 3D Blaster 4MB SGRAM v1.2, driver v4.07, C3D 0.1, Creative Graphics Racer 3D-MP RAM 602, driver v1.03, 602.2801.2. Screen shot examples from 3DFX Voodoo 4. In the creation of P3D WebTV. Used by PCTV. WebTV Television Board is a registered trademark of Exodus Interactive. WebTV is a registered trademark of PCTV/Dream Technology Inc. *Suggested retail price for 4PM upgradeable version.

Now You See It.



Next Month



Where should you play?

Great gameplay can be found on any system. But to play the most cutting-edge games, you need the best possible hardware. Next month, **Next Generation** performs an exhaustive examination of the currently supported hardware. Which is strongest? Which has the best future? And most importantly, which will have the best games in the years to come?

NEXT Generation #36
on sale November 18, 1997.

Smart readers have already subscribed. To find out how you too can save money and guarantee your copy, turn to the Insert between pages 128 and 129.

DIDDY KONG RACING

banana residue

elephant tusk impact

tire mark

third-degree lava burn



Diddy Kong™ Racing ©1997 RARE. Game by RARE™, © and the 'R' logo are trademarks of Nintendo of America Inc. ©1997 Nintendo of America Inc. www.nintendo.com



It's a race. It's an adventure. It's a severe head injury.

Over 20 different courses. 8 different speed demons. Land, air, water and all kinds of wrong turns in between. With Diddy Kong Racing only for N64™, the world is your crash site. And with Rumble Pak, you'll really feel the pain.



Now
You Can See
Resident
Evil



Through The
Director's
Eyes.



Includes the drop-dead

RESIDENT EVIL II

interactive demo.
PLUS A \$5.00 COUPON
towards its purchase.

CAPCOM  

www.capcom.com

© CAPCOM CO., LTD. 1999. CAPCOM U.S.A. INC. 1997.
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. RESIDENT EVIL and RESIDENT EVIL
Director's Cut are trademarks of CAPCOM CO., LTD.
CAPCOM is a registered trademark of CAPCOM CO., LTD.
PlayStation and the PlayStation logo are trademarks of
Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

Inside:

37 Pages of Previews Including:

Trails
Atari Games
Quake II
...and more!

26 Reviews Including:

GameDay '98
Madden '98
Tampa Bay Devil Rays
...and more!

With more than 100 pages
of additional coverage,
including reviews, features,
columns and departments, a

NEXT
GENERATION

imagine

a new way of publishing

Next Generation Online, www.next-generation.com